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ACCESSION TO THE DECEASE

OF

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BY JOHN ADOLPHUS, ESQ.

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Extracts from letters of Sir Joseph Yorke, Ambassador at the Hague, in November and December 1768, and January 1769.

THE

HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

GEORGE THE THIRD.

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State of the public mind.—Discordant views of Opposition.—System of Lord Chatham.—Probability of his having intended to form an administration.—Public indignation against France.—Preparations against invasion.—Keppel commands the grand fleet—captures two frigates—returns to port—is reinforced.—His engagement with D'Orvilliers.—Public discussion.—Publication by Sir Hugh Palliser.—Meeting of Parliament—the late naval transactions debated.—Altercation between Keppel and Palliser.—Court-martial ordered on Keppel—he is acquitted—rejoicings and outrages of the mob—the Admiral thanked by both Houses.—Palliser vacates his seat and resigns his appointments—is tried by a court-martial—and acquitted, though not without censure.—Keppel dissatisfied—resigns the command of the grand fleet.—Fox's motions against Lord Sandwich.—The Earl of Bristol's motion for his removal.—Proceedings respecting Greenwich Hospital.—Publication of Captain Baillie.—Motion in the Court of King's Bench.—House of Lords in Committee.—Lord Sandwich's explanation.—The Duke of Richmond moves resolutions—his second motion.—Resignation of naval officers.—Insubordination of the navy.—Debates on the manifesto of the American Commissioners.—

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1778.

State of the public mind.

PEACE with America began now to be the object of general desire in England; but the means of attaining, and terms of securing it, occasioned great diversity of opinion. The plan of the ministry was more adapted to reason than hope; it proffered concessions which, if early held forth, would have been irresistibly inviting; but the American cause being not less strenuously espoused, after the assumption of independence than at any previous period of the contest, it could not be expected that the leaders of Congress would be backward in using those arguments, and adhering to those resolutions, which were defended with so much pertinacity in the capital and senate of the mother-country. Opposition, although divided in their sentiments, united in decrying the measures of government and distressing administration, but could not form a system of conduct which would combine them

Discordant views of opposition.

in any direct or attainable project. A party, rather active and clamorous than numerous or popular, were desirous to concede the full extent of the American requisitions, and even to solicit, with humility approaching to abjectness, a preference in the favour of the late dependencies of the kingdom. Another party adopted the opinion of Lord Chatham, and strenuously resisted the claim of independence, as fatal to the welfare of Great Britain. The eloquence of that nobleman, employed occasionally for party-purposes, and procuring credence for exaggerated statements, had caused a general delusion, from which even the ministry were not exempt. The dignity of the mother-country was engaged in the American contest; but it affected her prosperity less than the public could be induced to believe. Lord Chatham deceived himself as much as others on this subject, and perhaps sacrificed his life to his patriotic feelings. Designs were probably entertained of engaging his assistance, as head of an administration, in directing the war, or giving efficiency to modes of conciliation: such an opinion, founded on the words of his last speech in Parliament, was strongly maintained*, and the measure would have been highly important in reconciling great part of the nation to the proceedings of government. The report of such an intention created lively sensations in foreign courts, and the measure was supposed sufficient for the restoration of vigour to the councils and glory to the arms of Great Britain†. But no operations, consistent with the opinions professed by Lord Chatham, could have reconciled the Americans, unless absolutely vanquished, to the idea of dependence‡.

System of Lord Chatham's adherents.

Probability of his forming an administration.

The public regarded with due indignation the treacherous interference of France. The possibility of a strict commercial union, attended with preference,

Indignation against France.

* See Lords' Debates, 8th April, 1778.

† From private information.

‡ On this subject I may quote the opinion of Thomas Paine: "Death," he says, "has preserved to the memory of this statesman that fame which he by "living would have lost. His plans and opinions, toward the latter part of his "life, would have been attended with as many evil consequences, and as much "reprobated in America, as those of Lord North." Letter to the Abbé Raynal, p. 64. And on the intire question of American Independence, Preface to Boucher's View of the Revolution, generally.

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added to the desire of avoiding expense and bloodshed, and enforced by the capture of General Burgoyne's army, might have produced a more general desire to acknowledge the independence of America; but the thought of making a concession to the hostile intervention, or threatened invasion of the ancient enemy of Great Britain, was contemplated with abhorrence. The menaces of France, however unlikely to be realized, occasioned vigorous exertions; the militia was embodied, camps were formed, and the country resounded with the clamour of arms.

Preparations against invasion.

Keppel commands the grand fleet.

Nor were the exertions of the admiralty deficient in furnishing means to meet the approaching exigency. When apprehensions began to be entertained of a rupture*, the first lord of the admiralty made application to Admiral Keppel, an officer known to be inimical to ministry, but whom a high reputation, the love of the sailors, and the experience derived from forty years' service indicated as most fit, to assume the command of the grand fleet: his appointment was frequently mentioned in terms of warm approbation by members of both parties in Parliament; and when the hostile designs of France were indisputable, he was intrusted with ample discretionary powers for defence of the kingdom. This unlimited confidence was highly honourable to administration, as Keppel declared to the King that he was unacquainted with them as ministers; and honourable to him, as he accepted the command without making any difficulty, or asking any favour; serving in obedience to the King's orders, and trusting to his Majesty's good intentions, and to his gracious support and protection†.

March. Its condition.

On his arrival at Portsmouth, before the King's message respecting France was delivered to Parliament, he found only six ships of the line fit for service; during his stay, four or five more arrived; but, on his representation, the fleet was speedily augmented to twenty sail of the line, sufficiently equipped‡.

* In November 1776.

† Defence of Admiral Keppel in his Trial, published by Blanchard, pp. 122, 3, 4.

‡ Idem, p. 124.

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With this armament, Admiral Keppel sailed from St. Helens, and soon discovered two French frigates, La Licorne and La Belle Poule, reconnoitring his fleet. Although war was not declared, yet the Admiral, in virtue of his full powers, gave orders to chase, and conduct them under his stern. The Licorne sailed with the fleet during the night, but, in the morning, after attempting to escape and firing a broadside, accompanied with a discharge of musketry into the America man-of-war, struck her colours, and was captured. M. De la Clocheterie, commander of La Belle Poule, refused to attend and speak to the British Admiral; and, after an obstinate engagement, having dismasted the Arethusa, escaped by steering into a bay among the rocks, and was towed out of danger by boats from the shore. Keppel, apprised from the papers of the Licorne, and other intelligence, that anchorage was ordered in Brest Harbour for thirty-two sail of the line, and three times the number of frigates, retired into Portsmouth. There was, however, reason to believe that the papers and intelligence were fabricated on purpose to deceive, nor did the Admiral escape censure for disgracing the grand fleet by a retreat, without calling a council of war.

13th June. 17th. He captures two frigates.

27th. Returns to port.

The flight of a British admiral from the coast of France, in dread of a superior squadron, excited general indignation. Some inveighed against the ministry for extreme negligence*; others reproached the Admiral†, and the public prints even threatened him with the fate of Byng‡.

Sensation of the public.

At this crisis the exertions of the admiralty were equal to the magnitude of impending danger. Lord Sandwich himself hastened to Portsmouth, reinforced the grand fleet with four ships of the line: Admiral Keppel put to sea, and was speedily joined by six others. The greater part of this force was in good condition and well appointed, and, although deficient in the ordinary proportion of frigates, the Admiral did

9th July. Keppel puts to sea again.

5th.

* Remembrancer, vol. vi. p. 233.
† Gibbon's Posthumous Works, vol. i. p. 534, 4to.
‡ Trial of Admiral Keppel, p. 125.

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1778 23rd to 27th. Engagement off Ushant.

not hesitate to sail in pursuit of the enemy, who had already left Brest*.

He soon fell in with the French fleet, consisting of thirty-two sail of the line, with an ample complement of frigates, under the command of Count d'Orvilliers. Four days were spent in manœuvring, to counteract the disposition shewn by the enemy to evade fighting; but at length a dark squall placed the fleets in a situation which rendered the conflict inevitable. The three divisions of the British fleet were commanded by Keppel, Sir Robert Harland, and Sir Hugh Palliser: the French by D'Orvilliers, the Comte Du Chaffault, and the Duc De Chartres. The engagement took place off Ushant. After several evolutions, shewing a determination in the French commander to shorten the engagement, he began the cannonade while the English fleet was at too great a distance to receive material injury; and, from the position he had taken, it was necessary for the British ships, in passing them to form the line, to receive the fire of their whole force. The reserved fire of the British fleet did dreadful execution; but the French having, in their usual manner, directed their battery against the rigging, the divisions most exposed were terribly torn and disabled. The fleets lay on different tacks, sailing in opposite directions; the engagement lasted nearly three hours, at the end of which they had passed each other, and the firing ceased. Admiral Keppel used his utmost endeavours to renew the combat: with some difficulty he tacked his own ship, but found that others in his division could not perform the same manœuvre; Sir Robert Harland, whose division had suffered less, obeyed without difficulty the signals to bear down into his wake; but Sir Hugh Palliser, whose ship had been very much damaged, did not join the Commander-in-Chief. Captain Windsor in the Fox was dispatched to direct the junction of Sir Hugh Palliser; but, being engaged in repairing his damages, he could not obey the order, till night put a

* Trial of Admiral Keppel, p. 125.

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period to further attempts. During the darkness, the French, placing three frigates with lights to deceive the English admiral, made sail for their own coasts, and were by the next morning almost out of sight. Keppel, finding pursuit vain, returned to Plymouth to refit, while D'Orvilliers, unmolested, gained the harbour of Brest. The English had a hundred and thirty-three slain, and three hundred and seventy-three wounded; the loss of the French was estimated at two thousand, including killed and wounded.

The French retreat.

Keppel returns to port.

The necessary repairs being completed, both fleets again put to sea. The French pursuing their former policy of shewing an ostentatious parade, but avoding a conflict, kept aloof, abandoning their trade to the depredations of British cruizers, while the English fleets from both the Indies returned unmolested.

20th August to 31st Oct. The French avoid a new engagement.

In describing the engagement, the French, in a style of gasconade approaching to burlesque, claimed the victory, and expressed their utter astonishment at finding themselves in the port of Brest, when they thought they had been many leagues at sea pursuing the English. Admiral Keppel, in his dispatch, extolled the conduct of his officers, particularly Sir Robert Harland and Sir Hugh Palliser; in excuse for not renewing the attack, he urged the disabled state of some of his fleet, many ships being unable to follow, when he wore to stand after the enemy; he, therefore, to use his own expression, suffered the French to form their line without molestation, "thinking they meant "handsomely to try their force with him the next "morning."

Accounts of the late action.

Such an apology, for the want of complete success in an engagement which fixed the attention of all Europe, and upon which the fate of the whole war so materially depended, could not be satisfactory to the public; and the zeal of party displayed itself in opposite statements, reflecting on the characters of the two Admirals with all the scurrility usual on such occasions. Keppel and Palliser were of nearly equal age in the service, both pupils and favourites of Sir Charles Saunders, and both indebted to his testamentary munificence.

Public discussions.

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Through the intervention of Sir Hugh, the negotiation between the ministry and the Admiral had been conducted; no circumstance before, or speedily after, the action indicated latent animosity; they returned to their stations with apparent cordiality; but the difference of their political connexions, and some transactions in the course of the day, gave probability to a conjecture that the general good of the service had been sacrificed; an extravagant and illiberal party feud was engendered, which disgraced the naval service, and effected the ruin of a man as high in character and able in his profession as any officer in the navy.

Publication by Sir Hugh Palliser.

Although Admiral Keppel received the public approbation of the admiralty, and was graciously distinguished at court, yet the general agitation did not subside. In consequence of a scurrilous attack in a morning paper, Sir Hugh Palliser published a vindication, which Keppel, though required by letter, peremptorily refused to authenticate; and was even suspected of dictating, or at least revising, a reply*. Palliser charged his superior officer with want of consistency, conceiving that, after highly approving his conduct in a public dispatch, he could not in justice refuse to screen his character from wanton and malignant attacks. Admiral Keppel, on the other hand, considered his official approbation a mere matter of form, calculated to prevent the bad effects of disunion in the service, and subject to explanation from the officer by whom it was conveyed; he considered also that it related merely to the time of actual engagement, and did not account for the acts of himself or any other commander, which frustrated the well-founded national hope of a renewed conflict. When the exertions of party, and public disposition to inquiry on so momentous a business, rendered immediate responsibility inevitable, Keppel refused to exculpate the Vice-Admiral, rather choosing to criminate him than stand in the situation of a delinquent himself.

* See these letters in the Remembrancer, vol. vii. p. 86; trial of Admiral Keppel, Blanchard's edition, p. 6 of the Appendix; and for the facts, see the trials of both Admirals, and Beatson's Naval and Military Memoirs, vol. iv. p. 415.

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25th Nov. Meeting of Parliament. King's speech.

Such was the state of the dispute on the meeting of Parliament. The King in his speech adverted to the critical conjuncture of affairs; mentioned, with dignified and becoming indignation, the proceedings of France, his own desire of peace, and reluctant, though vigorous exertions for making reprisals and protecting commerce. He directed the attention of Parliament to the armaments of other powers, and deplored the continuance of the troubles in America, which the wisdom and temperance displayed in the late conciliatory measures had not brought to a happy conclusion.

The late naval transactions debated.

In debating an amendment to the address, Mr. Fox introduced the great naval dispute, by stating the King's speech to be unfounded in fact, and its assertions false, and by alluding with severity to the disgraceful and dangerous situation of the grand fleet, when the Admiral first took the command of a force inferior by ten ships of the line to that of the enemy.

2nd Dec. Observations of Temple Luttrell.

The sea-fight off Ushant came more immediately under investigation on presenting the navy estimates, when Mr. Temple Luttrell observed that the transactions of that day loudly demanded inquiry: Admiral Keppel could not again serve with Sir Hugh Palliser; the nation eagerly expected investigation; the two Admirals were in the House, and ought to give information, as well for their own honour, as for the sake of public tranquillity.

Of Admiral Keppel.

Admiral Keppel declared the glory of the British flag had not been tarnished in his hands: were the business of the twenty-seventh of July to be done again, he would not change his mode of proceeding: he impeached no man; and was persuaded that Sir Hugh Palliser had manifested no want of the requisite most essential to a British seaman—courage. He then read a paper, describing the manner of his appointment, and the nature of his situation, hoped he should not be compelled to answer particular questions relative to the action, or respecting individuals, but was ready, if duly required, to explain his own conduct either in that House or elsewhere. Nothing was left

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untried to bring the French to a decisive action; but unless both squadrons were equally desirous, it was impossible. He acknowledged his surprise, when an officer under his command appealed to the public by a letter in a newspaper, signed with his name, when no accusation was made, and endeavoured by such means to render his superior odious and despicable. He resolved never again to set his foot on board a ship with that officer, because his conduct was fatal to all obedience and all command.

Of Palliser.

Sir Hugh Palliser said, he was no less indifferent than his superior officer to inquiry; on the contrary, it was his interest to desire it. He censured the Admiral's reserve, and wished him to deliver his opinions without disguise, that a full answer might be given. If the newspaper publication was imprudent or wrong, Sir Hugh alone must bear the consequences; but he complained that, while justice was rendered to his courage, he was calumniated for being deficient in other respects as an officer. An unauthenticated insinuation of neglect of duty was more injurious, because more difficult entirely to remove, than any direct crimination; and he had ineffectually sought an explanation from the Commander-in-Chief. He had reluctantly appealed to the public, and stated facts by which he would stand or fall. Sir Hugh denied that he had refused to obey signals, and treated all low insinuations and seeming tenderness with contempt; conscious of his innocence, he feared neither reports nor assertions, neither a parliamentary inquiry nor a public trial.

Keppel's reply.

Admiral Keppel thought the appeal to the public fully justified his resolution not again to sail with the Vice-Admiral, and asserted that the signal for coming into the Victory's wake was flying from three o'clock in the afternoon till eight in the evening unobeyed; at the same time he did not charge the Vice-Admiral with actual disobedience.

Court-martial ordered on Keppel. 9th Dec.

Sir Hugh Palliser immediately presented charges at the Admiralty against Admiral Keppel, upon which a court-martial was ordered. The compliance with this requisition occasioned parliamentary animadversion,

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and a strong memorial to the King, subscribed by twelve admirals*.

1778.

Mr. Temple Luttrell moved an address for the trial of Palliser, which only renewed the altercation between the two officers. Sir Hugh Palliser charged his opponent with acting in an unbecoming manner, attributed the accusation he had preferred to the necessity of vindicating his slandered character, and deplored the breach of their long intimacy. Admiral Keppel retorted with asperity, asserting that the Vice-Admiral was guilty of mutiny, and thanking God that in the approaching court-martial he was not the accuser, but the accused. The tide of popularity ran violently in favour of the Admiral; every sentence of his speech was received with applause; while Palliser was censured for conspiring with other members of administration to ruin his superior officer. In these proceedings the opposition displayed all the violence and rancour of party; no art was left unessayed to influence the public opinion in favour of Keppel, who was treated with a prostrate homage, rarely shewn to those who achieve important conquests, and was considered as a sacrifice to the ineptitude of administration. On account of his health, an act was passed for enabling the court-martial to sit on shore, and the warrant for his trial was comprised in words of tenderness and respect†.

30th. T. Luttrell's motion.

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Five charges were preferred against him, summed up in a general proposition, that he lost by misconduct and neglect a glorious opportunity of rendering a most essential service to the state, and had tarnished the honour of the British navy. After sitting assiduously thirty-two days, the court-martial, by an unanimous verdict, fully and honourably acquitted the Admiral, affirming, that, far from having sullied the honour of the navy, he had acted as became a judicious, brave, and experienced officer. On this acquittal, the cities

7th Jan. to 11th Feb. Keppel's trial:

and acquittal.

* See the memorial in the Remembrancer, vol. vii. p. 288. The subscribers were Lord Hawke, Admiral Moore, the Duke of Bolton; Admirals Graves, Pigot, and Harland; the Earl of Bristol; Admirals Young, Burton, and Geary; Lord Shuldham, and Admiral Gayton.

† See Parliamentary Register, vol. xi. p. 208.

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Rejoicings and outrages of the mob. 11th and 12th Feb.

of London and Westminster were illuminated two successive nights, in conformity to the injunctions of a mob, who shewed their resentment against those whom they considered as persecutors of Admiral Keppel, by acts of outrage. The house of Sir Hugh Palliser was broke open, and the furniture destroyed, and he himself was burnt in effigy. The dwellings of Lord George Germaine and Lord North were subjected to the insults of the populace; the gates of the Admiralty were thrown down, and the windows demolished; and the houses of Captain Hood and Lord Mulgrave, whose evidence gave umbrage to the friends of Keppel, were exposed to similar ravages. The city not only illuminated the Mansion-house and the Monument, but voted thanks to the Admiral, and presented him with their freedom in an oak box.

12th and 16th Feb. Keppel thanked by both Houses.

Both Houses of Parliament also thanked the acquitted Admiral for the conduct which had occasioned his trial: in the House of Commons only one voice was raised in dissent*; in the Lords the suffrages were unanimous.

Palliser vacates his seat, and resigns his appointments. 19th Feb.

The acquittal of Keppel seemed to fix a stigma on the character of Palliser: he therefore demanded a court-martial, and with becoming magnanimity resigned his seat at the Admiralty board, his rank of Colonel of marines, and government of Scarborough Castle, and vacated his seat in Parliament; retaining only his appointment of Vice-Admiral. This voluntary sacrifice frustrated a motion which Mr. Fox meditated for his removal.

12th April to 5th May. He is tried by a court-martial:

Admiral Keppel, although called on by the Admiralty, having refused to bring any accusation against Palliser†, the warrant for his trial was founded on a general allegation of matters disclosed during the late proceedings. Keppel was, however, a principal witness: the court-martial sat one-and-twenty days, when they declared the behaviour of Palliser, in many respects, exemplary and meritorious; but "they could "not help thinking it was incumbent on him to have

and acquitted, though not without censure.

* This dissentient was Mr. Strut. Stedman, vol. ii. p. 18.

† See Letters on this subject. Parliamentary Register, vol. xi. p. 239.

" made known to the Commander-in-Chief the disabled " state of his own ship, which he might have done by " the Fox at the time she joined him, or by other " means; notwithstanding this omission, they thought " him not in any other respect chargeable with mis- " conduct or misbehaviour, and therefore acquitted " him."

The public zeal subsides.

Such was the result of this ill-judged contest; those who, in their predilection for Admiral Keppel, rashly thought that his popularity would stand on a basis as permanent as the odium against his opponent was extensive, found themselves grievously deceived; the public, reflecting on all circumstances, inferred, from the declaration of both parties, that " a proud " day for England had been lost;" and they soon began to discover that, granting all the misconduct imputed to Sir Hugh Palliser to have been true, it was not sufficient to prevent the beneficial consequences they had a right to expect. The Admiral soon complained of the manner in which he was directed to resume the command of the fleet, was displeased with his reception at court and various other circumstances, and resigned the command. Notwithstanding the merits of his character, and the value of his past services, the public voice was never raised to require his restoration. Various intemperate speeches in Parliament, personally respecting the two admirals, were attended with no important results; the curiosity of the people soon languished, and the subject fell into complete disregard.

Keppel discontented.

Resigns the grand fleet.

Fox's various motions against Lord Sandwich.

Several motions were made in both Houses, tending to impeach the conduct of the Admiralty, and particularly of its first lord. Mr. Fox conducted these attacks in the House of Commons. For the purpose of obtaining a decision on the state of the armament which sailed under Admiral Keppel, he moved for copies of all letters received by government containing intelligence relative to the force under D'Orvilliers; but the proposition was rejected on the usual allegation, that it was dangerous to disclose the means of information*.

23rd Feb.

* 134 to 97.

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1779. 3rd March.

The papers found on board the Pallas and Licorne were, however, presented to Parliament: and on them Mr. Fox founded a motion, that the sending Admiral Keppel, in June last, to a station off the coast of France, with a squadron of twenty ships of the line and four frigates, when a French fleet of thirty-two ships of the line, with a great number of frigates, was at Brest, and ready to put to sea, was a measure greatly hazarding the safety of the kingdom, without prospect of adequate advantage. At the same time, he announced his intention of following this motion with another, for removing the first lord of the Admiralty, and intimated that the facts he had stated were sufficient to warrant an impeachment.

According to the captured papers, the French government had issued orders to provide anchorage for twenty-seven sail of the line, and announced that five more would be speedily in readiness. The statements in Admiral Keppel's defence, relative to the mode of his appointment to the command, and the condition in which he found the fleet, were also read.

Admiral Keppel being required to give personal testimony on the subject, prefaced his statement by observations on the delicacy of his situation; he avowed the facts stated in his defence, respecting the condition of the fleet on his repairing to Portsmouth in March, but acknowledged the subsequent exertions of the admiralty board to be highly meritorious. He was never more distressed than when, in consequence of the information acquired from the Pallas and Licorne, he was compelled, for the first time, to turn back on the enemy.

Lord North and Lord Mulgrave alleged that the written documents were loose, indefinite, without date, and did not prove the existence of the ships for which they required anchorage, but rather the contrary; and Admiral Keppel's evidence was of no weight, being founded only on the information derived frrm these vague and deceitful papers. The testimony respecting the state of the fleet in March was extraneous, as the motion was limited to June; and official documents proved, that, in July, forty-eight or forty-nine sail of

the line were ready for service. When Admiral Keppel sailed with twenty ships, D'Orvilliers did not venture to encounter him, but remained at Brest till the eighth of July; and, notwithstanding the Admiral's return, his sailing produced the advantage of facilitating the arrival of the homeward-bound fleets. The retreat was however censurable, being founded on false information, and adopted without calling a council of officers.

Admiral Keppel, in several explanatory replies, urged that the information obtained from the French frigates was proved true on the twenty-seventh of July; when the very ships, manned and armed as described in those papers, were opposed to his squadron. Although he had not formally called a council, yet he consulted several officers individually, who concurred in returning to port; and if he omitted that compliment to Lord Mulgrave, who was a captain in the fleet, it was only because such young men, in their eagerness to fight, overlooked every consideration of prudence. The motion was negatived*.

A similar fate attended another proposition offered by Mr. Fox, affirming, "that at the commencement "of hostilities with France, the state of the navy was "unequal to what the House and the nation were led "to expect, as well from the declarations of ministers, "as from the large grants of money, and increase of "debt, and inadequate to the exigencies of so import-"ant a crisis." In support of this motion, he reviewed the conduct and declarations of ministers, inferring, as an alternative, that they were either ignorant or treacherous. "If ignorant, who would trust his "dearest and nearest concerns to such men? If trea-"cherous, where was the person mad enough to con-"fide in them? Fortune, and not the judgment of "ministers, had saved the country from destruction." 8th March.

Lord Mulgrave shewed the superior management of the navy in the present, to any previous period. He denied that fortune had been peculiarly favourable

* 204 to 170.

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to this country; France had been saved from destruction by a succession of escapes as extraordinary as unexpected. D'Orvilliers had escaped from Keppel; D'Estaing from Lord Howe off Rhode Island, and afterwards from Byron to the West Indies. From the nature of the government, the first efforts of France were always more vigorous than ours, which the frame of our constitution rendered dilatory and languid. When that impediment was removed, we had always proved victorious. Our force would daily increase, while theirs, having attained the meridian, would decline.

Admiral Keppel was a distinguished opponent of administration; and Lord Howe supported the same cause, by affirming he was deceived into his command, and deceived while he retained it; tired and disgusted, he obtained permission to resign, and would have returned, had not the presence of a superior enemy in the American seas prevented him, till the period of Admiral Byron's arrival. Recollecting what he felt and suffered, he would never resume a situation which might terminate in equal ill-treatment, mortification, and disgust. Past experience had sufficiently convinced him, that, besides risking his honour and professional character, he could not, under the present administration, render essential service to his country*.

22nd March.

Returning to his subject, Mr. Fox moved that the omission to reinforce Lord Howe before June last, and not sending a fleet to the Mediterranean, were instances of misconduct and neglect. He made these motions for the avowed purpose of involving administration in an inextricable dilemma; his last proposition stood on the supposition that the navy was inadequate; that being negatived, he should pursue the line implied in the negation, although he knew it was untrue, and argue as if the navy had been adequate.

The discussion was rather personal than of public importance; Lord North attacking his opponent with sprightly raillery on his avowed resolution to argue

* The division, on a motion for the previous question, was 174 on the affirmative to 246 on the negative.

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on a principle he knew to be false. The first proposition was negatived*; the other withdrawn without division.

19th April.

After the Easter recess, Mr. Fox made his promised motion for dismissing Lord Sandwich from his Majesty's presence and councils for ever. In supporting it, no new argument or fact was adduced; the insufficiency of Admiral Keppel's squadron; the coolness shewn to him, the conspiracy of ministers against his life; and their duplicity toward him on every occasion, were unsparingly advanced. The proceedings of the fleets in all parts of the globe were reviewed, their successes undervalued, and their failures or disappointments exaggerated.

Lord Mulgrave professed astonishment that, after so many detections, Mr. Fox should persevere in his endeavours to persuade the House that certain assertions, of which he advanced not a single proof, were facts, when most of them had been proved unfounded. Lord Sandwich, instead of censure, merited great praise for his official conduct. When he was raised to the chief post in the admiralty, there was not a year's timber in any of the yards, no stores in the arsenals, and the whole navy in a perishing state. By his activity and sagacity he had broken a mercantile combination; each yard now contained timber sufficient for three years' consumption; the arsenals were full of stores; the navy had a greater number of large ships than at any previous period; and was not only in a respectable, but in a flourishing state. This testimony was fully confirmed by Mr. Boyle Walsingham, and the motion was rejected†.

23rd April. Motion for his removal by the Earl of Bristol.

A similar effort for the removal of Lord Sandwich was made by the Earl of Bristol, who, in a speech of considerable length and ability, attempted to shew that the naval service was neglected in all its departments; the national treasure shamefully squandered, and no adequate provision made for defence; the navy had rapidly decayed since the resignation of Lord

* 209 to 135. † 221 to 118.

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Hawke, while the expense had increased beyond all precedent.

Lord Sandwich observed that he was not solely, but jointly, responsible for the employment of the naval force, which was determined in the cabinet, and finally sanctioned by the King. He was answerable only for the use or abuse of the means placed peculiarly in his hands. He justified the increase of expense, by stating the increased magnitude of the ships in the royal navy; and accounted for temporary wants, by referring to the fires in the dock-yards at Portsmouth and Chatham. The stores were nearly six times as great as during the presidency of his predecessor; the ships at that period being built with green timber, were mostly rotten and unfit for service, whereas they were now constructed of the best materials, and highly equipped. The motion being negatived*, a short protest was signed by twenty-five peers, and one of considerable length, containing a recapitulation of his reasons, by the Earl of Bristol.

11th May. Proceedings respecting Greenwich Hospital.

In the House of Lords, the Duke of Richmond made several motions, tending to prove the mismanagement of Greenwich Hospital under Lord Sandwich. These inculpations derived their origin from an extraordinary circumstance. For his long services in the navy, Captain Thomas Baillie, one of the oldest officers, received the appointment of Lieutenant-Governor. He soon discovered, or fancied, great abuses in the administration of the charity, and at different times presented petitions and remonstrances to the authorities of the establishment and to the board of admiralty. Failing to obtain what he considered a due attention, he published a printed appeal to the Governors, comprising the chief officers of state, privy-counsellors, judges, flag officers, and various other persons. It alleged, among other grievances, that the health and comfort of the seamen in possession of the benefits of the charity were sacrificed to corruption, in contracts for provisions, clothing, and stores; which

Publication of Captain Baillie.

* 78 to 33.

being held by men in offices, who were thus led by interest to sanction instead of fulfilling their duty by correcting and controlling frauds. It further alleged that landmen were appointed to offices and places designed exclusively for seamen; to them were all the supposed abuses imputed; and they, it was said, owed their appointments to their being freeholders of the county of Huntingdon, and in that quality rendering acceptable services to the Earl of Sandwich at elections.

Motion in the Court of King's Bench.

It could not be supposed, nor was it intended, that a pamphlet intended for such profuse distribution, and containing matter so suited to the taste of the factious, should be confined to those to whom it was ostensibly addressed. It soon was generally circulated, and the officers who considered themselves calumniated, obtained from the Court of King's Bench a rule, calling on Captain Baillie to shew cause why a criminal information should not be filed against him. In support of the party accused, some of the most eminent leaders of the bar were retained; but, great as were their fame and their merits, nothing of their efforts has been preserved, the whole attention of the court and the public being engrossed by an animated and eloquent argument delivered, after them, by Mr. Erskine, who had been recently called to the bar: till that day he was unknown; but from that day, never to be forgotten in the legal profession. The rule was discharged, and the prosecutors left, if they chose such a recourse, to the ordinary proceeding by indictment*.

1778. Nov. 24th.

March 11th to June 7th. House of Lords in a Committee.

In the House of Lords, the Duke of Richmond moved for a great number of papers, resting the matter principally on the grounds laid down by Captain Baillie. The present revenue of the Hospital was between 70 and 80,000 pounds, arising from the Derwentwater estate; the sum of sixpence per month paid by every seaman, both in the royal and in the merchant's service, and the interest of 245,000*l.* three per cent. stock. He briefly detailed the supposed malversations, and charged that a proposition had proceeded

* Speeches of the Hon. Thomas Erskine, vol. i. p. 1.

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from Lord Sandwich to Captain Baillie, that, if all further proceedings were stopped, he should have an appointment of 600*l.* a-year, being fully equivalent to the deputy-governorship of the hospital, from which he had been removed; but which, in the spirit of a gentleman, an officer, and an honest man, he had rejected, although the temptation was powerful, as he had a wife and several children to maintain.

To this assertion Lord Sandwich returned a firm and direct answer, that upon his honour it was false. The papers were granted, and, for more than two months, the House, in a commitee, was occupied in the investigation of arguments and the examination of evidence.

May 14th. Lord Sandwich's explanation.

When this process had been perfected, the Earl of Sandwich made his answer to the attempted inculpations. He claimed to be considered a real friend to the noble charity, and displayed the services he had rendered to it and to the public, since 1744, when he first came into office at the admiralty; and this he stated in answer to witnesses who continually asserted that Captain Baillie was the true and unwearied friend of the pensioners, as if he were the only one, and others had neglected their interests. In 1745, the Derwentwater estates produced only 6,900*l.* per annum; they now yielded 11,988*l.* and would soon be further advanced by 3,000*l.*, as tenders had been delivered for taking them at that price on a lease for twenty-one years, and this, exclusive of an annual 8000*l.*, the produce of lead mines, which he had greatly improved by the erection of a smelting mill. He had befriended the pensioners by the erection of an infirmary, to separate the diseased from those who were healthy, and which he would not hesitate to pronounce one of the completest hospitals in the kingdom. Until within four years, the dining hall had only been sufficient to contain six hundred persons, and when they sat down to their meals, an equal number was kept in waiting to succeed to their places, from which they were hurried away. Under his Lordship's absolute and sole direction, and upon a site discovered by him, an enlarged

hall had been constructed, in which the whole party had been at once accommodated. He had abolished the abuse of permitting inferior offices to be performed by deputy. One substitute only he had suffered to remain; but it was because he had been oppointed by one of his Lordship's predecessors, to whom he would not wish to give pain. Very different had his conduct been toward a Huntingdonshire freeholder, named Joy, who was dismissed for similar conduct; and he averred, in answer to the slander on that score, that among two thousand one hundred and sixty-nine persons then in the hospital, there was not one man from that county, nor one who was not thoroughly qualified, from length of service at sea, and infirmities contracted in the performance of his duty. Other calumnies were no less clearly and satisfactorily refuted. To the charge that landmen were appointed to offices in the hospital, contrary to the spirit, if not the letter of the charter, his Lordship answered, that of twenty-nine civil officers in the hospital, he had appointed fourteen, of whom eleven were not seafaring men, and some of them, had they been so, would have been utterly unfit for their employment; the remaining fifteen had been placed by his predecessors, of whom ten were landmen, and only one was engaged in a department which a seaman could not have occupied. All this had been done in conformity with a series of precedents, coeval with the existence of the institution. Had a single landsman ever been admitted as an object of the charity, as a pensioner, or a military officer, that would have been a scandalous and notorious abuse; but he defied the most rigid enquirer to shew that such a transaction had taken place during his administration*.

Duke of Richmond moves resolutions.

Notwithstanding this explanation, the Duke of Richmond moved a long series of resolutions, condemning the administration of the hospital, and an address, praying the King to instruct the Judges to prepare a bill for abolishing the charter and new modelling the

* This powerful and convincing defence was arranged by Mr. Charles Butler; Reminiscences, vol. i, p. 72.

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system, and to confer on Captain Baillie some mark of royal favour. He was supported by the Earl of Effingham and Lord Camden, whose arguments were answered by the Earls of Chesterfield, Bathurst, and Mansfield. His motion was negatived*; the minority seceded in disgust, and the House passed resolutions declaring that there was no reason for a legislative interference, that the allegations in Captain Baillie's book were groundless and malicious, and generally approving and applauding the management of the hospital and the treatment of the pensioners during Lord Sandwich's administration.

14th. The Duke of Richmond's second motion.

As a last effort, his grace moved, but with no better success†, to print the evidence and the proceedings of the committee. The debate contained nothing worthy of notice, except a violent attack made by the noble Duke on the Chief Justice of the King's Bench, imputing to him certain phrases used five years ago respecting the American war. Lord Mansfield acknowledged his obligation to him for the opportunity of explaining expressions which had been so frequently and so grossly misrepresented, both within doors and without; and he fully refuted the calumnious assertions that he had said, "We had passed the Rubicon;" and on another occasion, that "We must kill the Ameri- "cans, or they would kill us." The first was merely an argumentative description of one branch of an alternative; the other was introduced only as an expression used by Gustavus Adolphus, when his own army was drawn up in the field against an enemy.

It is plain that these efforts had no object but that of creating and inflaming popular prejudice against the first lord of the Admiralty; because, at no subsequent period, whether the Duke of Richmond was in office or opposition, was the question revived by him or any of his friends; but under the system practised and patronized by Lord Sandwich, the noble national institution went on increasing in wealth, prosperity, and utility.

* 67 to 25. † The numbers were, 18 to 43.

1779. Resignations of officers.

These repeated attacks were part of a grand system for *clogging the wheels of government*, announced by the leaders of opposition at the beginning of the session; the project was not confined in its effect to the legislative body; several officers of high rank refused to serve under the present administration; and it was reported that twenty naval captains meditated the dangerous resolution of resigning in a body; such dispositions could not be confined to the superior class; insubordination became truly alarming, and, before the end of the session, symptoms of mutiny appeared on board the grand fleet at Torbay, and were with difficulty suppressed.

Insubordination in the navy.

Debates on the manifesto of the American commissioners. 4th and 7th Dec. 1778.

While such violent debates, attended with such alarming effects, were maintained respecting the navy, the conduct of the war in America, and other subjects connected with the army, were agitated with no less heat. The manifesto of the commissioners, on quitting that continent, gave rise to motions, by Mr. Coke and the Marquis of Rockingham, for addressing the King to express disapprobation of the threatening paragraphs. The speeches of opposition in both Houses were rather declamatory than argumentative, and the debates extremely desultory. The ministry, expressing surprise at the perverseness of their opponents, denied that the proclamation contained menaces which were not founded on the ancient usages of the war, and justified by views of self-preservation. The motions were rejected by large majorities*; thirty-one peers protested.

Parliamentary conduct of General Burgoyne.

General Burgoyne, by his previous conduct, as well as by his mode of opposition in Parliament, fully justified the opinion of General Washington, who, in a letter to Congress on the propriety of terminating his absence on parole, considered him, in his present frame of mind, not hostile, but rather an ally of America†. In opposing the address, General Burgoyne deplored the condition of the country, which exhibited every symptom of immediate dissolution. Her strug-

26th Nov.

* In the House of Commons, 209 to 122. In the House of Lords, 71 to 37.

† See Washington's Letters, vol. ii. p. 383.

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gles, if such in their weakness they could be called, appeared the last struggles for existence. He trusted the time was not remote when the voice of the nation and the light of truth would pierce the gloomy atmosphere that enwrapt the throne, and shew things as they were. A few days afterward, he moved that all the letters written by himself and other commanders to government, since the convention of Saratoga, should be laid before the House, which was granted without opposition.

His motion for papers.

Granted.

Sir William Howe adopted a line of conduct somewhat similar, but more moderate. He complained of the disregard of his recommendations, the restraints imposed on his exertions in America, and the neglect of supplying him with instructions. He exculpated from these censures Lord North, but laid accumulated blame on Lord George Germaine, under whose conduct he was sure the war would never be advantageously conducted. He also obtained, by a motion, copies of all letters between him and the secretary of state for America, during the period of his command.

4th Dec. Similar motions by Sir William Howe.

The House being formed into a committee on the American war, Sir William Howe entered into a long defence, tracing every important step he had taken, and endeavouring to shew that he had never been remiss in his endeavours, rarely wrong in his judgment; and if, on some occasions, he had failed to realise the sanguine hopes of the country, he had executed as much as could be reasonably expected; and had been restrained by political reasons, which he did not think proper to disclose, from prosecuting some of his victories to the greatest advantage. In conclusion, he proposed to examine witnesses in support of his observations.

17th Feb. 1779. Granted. 29th April. Committee formed.

Although the ministry had not objected to the delicacy of sentiment which induced the General to press on the House a vindication of his conduct, they could not regard with indifference an attempt to establish, by evidence, facts gratuitously stated; facts which, if designed to exculpate the General, were only heard through complaisance, as no criminatory motion or

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proceeding existed; or, if intended to subject the ministry to censure, ought to be accompanied by a specific charge. The motion for receiving evidence, after many efforts at amendment, was negatived; but as the committee was not formally dissolved, and great obloquy was thrown on administration for appearing to evade inquiry, it was afterward suffered to pass.

3rd May.

Evidence examined.

The examinations were designed not merely to elucidate the conduct of General Howe, but to establish enlarged principles relative to the future events of the war. They tended to prove that the force employed in America was at no time adequate to the subjugation of the country; nor indeed could any other force prove successful while the inhabitants continued averse from the British government. From this circumstance, and the nature of the country, covered with wood, and intersected with ravines, the troops could not act at any considerable distance from the fleet, and their operations were accordingly slow, and subject to interruption. General Howe's conduct was strenuously defended; and several officers, particularly Lord Cornwallis and General Grey, spoke in the highest terms of the personal affection with which he was regarded by the whole army.

13th May. Counter-evidence ordered.

From the unexpected latitude which the examinations had assumed, the ministry found themselves under the necessity of appealing to counter-evidence to disprove some of the statements. Accordingly, Mr. de Grey moved for a summons directing the attendance of ten witnesses, which occasioned violent exclamations on the part of opposition. Mr. Burke decried the proceedings as irregular and unfair; ministers, he said, affected to applaud the military conduct of Sir William Howe, and now, by a side-wind, in a late stage of the examination, endeavoured to invalidate and defeat evidence which they could not pretend to disbelieve. Against this mode of argument the former declarations of the same party were successfully urged; they had begged only for inquiry; if the inquiry proved merely *ex parte*, that would be the fault of administration, who might call evidence

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in their own defence, if they deemed it necessary; but now these improper objections were raised. The American secretary declared he had no disposition to accuse General Howe; he principally desired evidence to disprove the statement that America was almost unanimous in resisting the claims of Great Britain. Mr. Fox, triumphing in the apparent strength of the testimony already given, contemptuously recommended that no opposition should be made to the production of further information, from every quarter, and through every channel; but Mr. Burke would not acquiesce, and, when the names of parties intended for examination were read, reviled them as refugees and custom-house officers. The motion was, however, agreed to without a division.

18th May to 1st June. Burgoyne's evidence examined.

During this interval, General Burgoyne proceeded in the examination of his witnesses; they proved that, in his unfortunate expedition, he had acted with uniform bravery and skill, and endeared himself to his whole army. These facts were never denied, and therefore no endeavour was made to impeach them.

8th June. Counter-evidence respecting Sir William Howe.

The counter-evidence on Sir William Howe's inquiry asserted that the Americans were by no means unanimous in their opposition to the British government, and nothing but egregious neglect in the Commander-in-Chief could have enabled Congress to retain a single adherent. The force placed at his disposal was fully sufficient to effect the real purpose of his mission, which was not the conquest of America, but the grant of protection to those who would join the British army; and, under such circumstances, the nature of the country was not less favourable to the English than to the American general. Mr. Joseph Galloway*, one of the two witnesses examined, was extremely severe in his censures of Sir William Howe.

24th June. Objections.

The General expressed great disapprobation at the effect of this testimony, which, by giving undue weight to the opinions of individuals, was calculated to injure his character with the public; he therefore re-

* Late speaker of the Pennsylvanian Assembly, and author of several able and well-written pamphlets on the subject of the American war.

quired permission to call new evidence. This proposition was strongly resisted, the intent of the examination being not to affect the General, whom no man had accused, but to clear the conduct of administration, which he had loudly censured. At his request, however, Mr. Galloway was directed to attend again for cross-examination; but on the day appointed, the General was not in the House, and, after waiting some time, Mr. R. Whitworth moved to adjourn. 29th June. Both parties were now wearied and disgusted; the opposition, the first movers in the business, were convinced it could not tend to the advantage they expected; and administration, having only meant to exculpate themselves, had no longer any object to pursue: the motion was therefore carried without debate; and thus the committee expired without forming any resolution. The next day General Howe Committee dissolved. 30th. complained of surprise; he attended the House, he said, at four o'clock, not expecting the dissolution of the committee at so early an hour; he had no intention of putting further questions to Mr. Galloway, but meant to have pressed his former request for the examination of new witnesses. A debate of some acrimony ensued, in consequence of a peremptory demand, from both Sir William and Lord Howe, of an express statement, whether the conduct of the General furnished cause of crimination: the ministers refused a reply, but did not disavow the speech of Earl Nugent, who declared that no charge was ever intended; the General and his brother had the approbation of their Sovereign; no confidence was withdrawn, and, if offered, their services would be accepted.

At an early period of the session, Earl Nugent re- 16th Dec. 1778. Affairs of Ireland discussed. called to the attention of the House the state of Ireland, which was, in many respects, deplorable and alarming. The revenue had failed, and subjected government to the degrading expedient of borrowing money from a private banking house, and, after obtaining one supply, to the mortification of a refusal; discontent was assiduously promoted, and alarms for the

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safety of the country were entertained*. His lordship drew a deplorable picture of the calamities and distresses of the lower class; and Lord Newhaven gave notice of his intention to move for a bill, allowing the exportation of all merchandizes except woollens. The prohibition of commerce with America, he said, had driven the manufacturers and labourers to unexampled distress, lowered the value of lands, prevented the payment of rents, and endangered the existence of the kingdom.

19th Jan

Pursuing his original plan, Earl Nugent gave notice of his intention to move for the establishment of a cotton manufactory in Ireland, with a power of exporting to Great Britain, and an open trade with

10th March.

America, the West India Islands, and Africa. A committee was afterward formed on the motion of Lord Newhaven, for taking into consideration the acts of parliament relating to the importation of sugars to

18th. Partial relief granted.

Ireland; but no effectual progress was made. In consequence of a royal message, it was agreed, that, as the revenues of Ireland were shewn to be inadequate and deficient, the charge of the regiments on that establishment, serving out of that kingdom, should be defrayed by Great Britain, and two acts were passed for encouraging the growth of tobacco and hemp, and the manufacture of linen.

2th of April. Dissatisfaction of the Irish.

Such concessions were neither effective nor satisfactory; the merchants of Dublin, in an assembly holden at the Tholsel, expressed indignation at "the "unjust, illiberal, and impolitic opposition of self- "interested people in Great Britain to the encourage- "ment of their commerce: it originated in avarice "and ingratitude; and they resolved neither directly

Non-importation agreement.

"nor indirectly to import or use any British goods "which they could produce or manufacture, until an "an enlightened and just policy should appear to "actuate those who had taken so active a part in "opposing regulations favouring the trade of Ireland."

* Memoirs of Grattan, vol. ii. p. 297, et. seq.

This example was followed by several counties and towns, particularly Cork, Waterford, Kilkenny, Wicklow, and Roscommon*.

Volunteer associations.

A more decisive measure than the vote of an assembly at Dublin was the establishment of armed corps of volunteers, which now began to prevail throughout the country. A rumour of French invasion, and the diminution of the national force by drafts for American service, furnished a motive for these associations, which, being in accordance with the widely diffused opinions in favour of America, and the disposition to resist Great Britain, were countenanced by the most eminent characters, and armed, disciplined, and accoutred at their own expense. Government knew not how to regulate the conduct of the associated bodies, but surveyed them with alarm, as a new power introduced into a community already sufficiently difficult to govern.

11th May. The Marquis of Rockingham's motion respecting Ireland.

When the House of Commons had ceased to discuss the affairs of Ireland, the Marquis of Rockingham introduced the subject in the Lords, by moving an address for such documents relative to the trade of Ireland, as would enable the national wisdom to pursue effectual measures for promoting the common strength, wealth, and commerce of both kingdoms. He reviewed, with general disapprobation, the conduct of the revenue, trade, and government, both civil and military, since 1755, and inveighed against the ministry for suffering the late military associations; the necessity for them should have been prevented, or the people should have been legally commissioned and enabled to take arms. Such associations would probably repel invasion; but the same spirit might be exerted in resisting oppression and injustice. The address was agreed to; but, although two subsequent debates arose, no effectual measure could be devised, and the ministry entered into an implied agreement to prepare, during the recess, a satisfactory plan of relief.

27th May, and 2nd June.

10th March.

A bill, brought into the House of Commons by

* Plowden, vol. i. p. 466 to 486.

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1779. Relief afforded to Protestant dissenters. 28th April.

Mr. Frederick Montague, in consequence of a motion by Sir Henry Houghton, for further relief of Protestant dissenting ministers and school-masters, passed, after several debates, in which the nature of religious liberty, and principles of toleration, were amply discussed. The question was fairly and ably argued, and extremes were avoided in the decision, though advanced in debate. Mr. Wilkes reprobated every species of religious restraint; and Mr. Dunning argued against the only restriction the bill yet contained, that of requiring persons who preached in public, or undertook the education of youth, to declare their belief in the doctrine of Christianity, as established by the Holy Scriptures. He contended that even such a test might be productive of evil; for those who could not sign it would be liable to the penal statutes still in force; and if one single prosecution arose, instead of being a bill for relief, it would be an act of oppression. Sir William Bagot, Sir Roger Newdigate, and a few others, opposed the general principle of the bill, as injurious to the established religion. Lord North commended its tolerating principle, as perfectly consistent with the spirit of the times and the disposition of the whole bench of Bishops; the test proposed was such as no Christian and Protestant dissenter could refuse to sign. As to Deists, and persons denying the Trinity, or professing other singular religious opinions, not being either Christians or Protestants, the bill had nothing to do with them; but if the state could not regulate, it had a right to guard against authorizing men to teach such notions. No report is preserved of any debate in the Lords.

16th June. Rupture with Spain announced.

At a late period of the session, when no further business was expected, Lord North informed the House of Commons that Count D'Almadovar, the Spanish ambassador, had withdrawn, after delivering a manifesto, which, with a message from the King, would be presented to Parliament on the morrow. This information occasioned several animated philippics from opposition, decrying the ignorance and delusion of ministers, and threatening exemplary punish-

ment. A motion, by Mr. Burke, for a committee on the state of the nation was, however, at the instance of his own friends, withdrawn.

17th June. King's message.

The King's message declared an uniform and sincere desire to cultivate peace and friendly intercourse with the court of Spain; good faith, honour, and justice alone had guided his conduct, and he saw with surprise the grievances alleged in justification of intended hostility, all which were mis-represented, or had never before been imparted. He relied, therefore, on the zeal and spirit of Parliament for means to defeat the enterprizes of his enemies against the honour of his crown, and the rights and interests of the nation.

Addresses.

In the House of Commons, the address was unanimously acceded to; but Lord John Cavendish ineffectually moved a second address, requiring the King to collect his fleets and armies, and to exert the whole force of the kingdom against the House of Bourbon*.

Amendments moved.

In the upper House, the Earl of Abingdon refused his assent to any such address; and, if single, would divide the House, till the grievances of the people were redressed by the expulsion of the ministers, who had wantonly, openly, and in defiance of the majesty of the people of England, not only broken down the fences of the constitution, but left the country exposed to ravage, and threatened with destruction. He moved an amendment, praying for a change of system, which was necessary to unite the people and preserve the empire.

Although the Duke of Richmond requested him to withdraw this motion, Lord Abingdon persisted in taking the sense of the House, by whom it was rejected†. The Duke then proposed a second amendment, not materially different in substance, though better arranged, which he supported by a long speech, decrying the conduct of administration, as tending to create civil war in every part of the British dominions. He was ably sustained by Lord Shelburne. The ministry did not enter into the wide field of argument

* Lost by 156 to 80. † 62 to 23.

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to which they were challenged; but contented themselves with answering a few personal reflections, and with brief remarks on the occasion of the message. The Duke, in reply, declared the real aim of his amendment to be the withdrawing of the troops from America, for the protection of Great Britain. His motion was lost*, but a long protest was subscribed by twenty peers.

Protest.

21st June. Militia bill.

As a measure of efficacious defence in the approaching crisis, a bill was introduced for increasing the militia to a number not exceeding its present amount doubled, and enabling individuals to raise loyal corps. It was combated in all its stages, as indicative of national weakness, oppressive and impracticable. The minister declared it was not his wish to pursue the measure with obstinacy; but submitted it to the judgment of the House, not meaning to press it pertinaciously. A motion of Sir Grey Cooper, for limiting the number of militia incorporated by ballot to fifteen thousand four hundred and twenty-four, was only averted by remonstrances of the minister's friends, that it would afford a triumph to his opponents, already too apt to stigmatize his want of firmness. The bill passed the House of Commons; but, in the Lords, the clause for doubling the militia was rejected by a considerable majority†.

30th June. Altered by the Lords.

2nd July. Passes in its amended state.

On its return to the Commons, the minister was sharply upbraided for the want of unanimity in the cabinet, while he was so constantly recommending unanimity to the House. He defended himself with great ability, observing that as minister of that House, he had not thought it necessary, before he introduced the measure, to consult those who, not being representatives of the people, had no constituents to support the burthen; but, when the members of the upper House, who were Lord-Lieutenants of counties, took the proposition into consideration, they rejected it as impracticable. He did not agree in their judgment, but could not controul it; his own experience in the

* 57 to 32. † 39 to 22.

county where he was Lord-Lieutenant, induced him to recommend the measure; but his experience could not regulate the opinions of the peers. What remained of the bill was highly important to the public service; and, waiving every consideration of pride, he was willing to accept the power of augmenting the national force by volunteer corps, even as "crumbs falling from "the table of their lordships."

Its final adoption was then objected to on the ground that it was a money-bill, unconstitutionally amended by the Lords; the House was twice divided, but the efforts were ineffectual*.

23rd June. Bill for annulling protections to seamen.

At a late hour in the night, after the debate on the militia, Mr. Wedderburne moved to bring in a bill for removing difficulties in manning the navy, by resuming protections granted to certain descriptions of seamen, watermen, and their apprentices; and by depriving of their right to a habeas corpus all persons of those classes who had been impressed since the day when the royal message respecting Spain was delivered. His motive for making this motion at so late an hour was, that the effect might not be prevented by disclosure, and that an ample supply of seamen might, without impediment, be obtained for the grand fleet. The principle of the bill did not escape severe animadversion, as an invasion of those rights of protection which were not less sacred, defined and inviolable, than those by which life and property were enjoyed; and the manner and time of introducing the measure were inveighed against as pitiful, sneaking, and treacherous, like a midnight irruption into a dwelling-house for the purpose of plunder, but with a determination to commit murder rather than abandon the spoil. The bill, however, passed both Houses, after violent debates; a protest was entered against the refusal to adopt some proposed amendments, signed by fourteen, and another against the general principles of the act, by four peers.

29th June. Protests.

Two attempts at domestic regulation made in this session remain to be mentioned.

* The numbers were, on the first, 63 to 45: on the second, 51 to 23.

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1779. March 11th. The Bishop of Landaff's bill against adultery.

The first was a bill, introduced into the House of Lords by the Bishop of Landaff, for the more effectual discouragement of adultery. In the early annals of the country, he observed, this crime had been much less frequent than of late, because more severely punished. Notwithstanding the exemplary conduct of his Majesty, there had been, during seventeen years of his reign, as many divorces as had occurred in the whole antecedent period since the transactions of society had been submitted to written record. He proposed to bring the modern nearer to the ancient practice, by regulating the dower of divorced wives, and prohibiting, for a limited time, their marriage with the partners of their sin. Beside other arguments, more strong and serious, advanced by other peers, the Earl of Effingham said that, instead of prohibiting the parties offending from intermarrying, it would be a more effectual punishment to compel their union within twelve hours after the divorce act.

April 19th. May 4th. Rejected in the House of Commons.

When it had passed the Lords, the bill was most vigorously resisted in the House of Commons. Mr. Fox considered it as calculated rather to increase than diminish the crime against which it was directed; and he opposed it also on the non-representation system which of late had so much engaged their attention. The ladies, whom it principally affected, were totally unrepresented, and the bill was unequal, unjust, and tyrannical, tending to prevent the fair delinquents from making the only possible atonement to society for their past errors. Lord Nugent, Lord Beauchamp, and some other members on the same side, united in their speeches solid argument with polite pleasantry, while Mr. Frederick Montague, Lord Ongley, and Mr. Moysey, defended the bill; but, on a division, the motion for a second reading was rejected*.

Bill relating to the right of printing Almanacs.

Another proposed measure demands notice, as it affected the interest of two most important bodies, and established a great public right. For nearly two centuries, the universities of Oxford and Cambridge,

* 51 to 40.

and the Stationers' Company, under a patent granted by James I, had claimed the sole right of printing and publishing almanacs. Mr. Thomas Carnan, a bookseller in London, determined to question the validity of this monopoly, issued, with many improvements on the old form, almanacs combined with useful tables and important articles of information. The patentees, to protect their long-conceded rights, filed a bill in equity, to restrain Mr. Carnan, by an injunction, from continuing his sale. An issue at law was directed, and, after strenuous argument, the patent was declared void, and the bill in equity dismissed.

April 29th. May 10th. Counsel heard.

To restore the supposed rights thus abolished, Lord North brought in a bill to revest in the Universities and the Stationers' Company their long-acknowledged privilege. Counsel were heard at the bar. Mr. Davenport first addressed the House, and was followed by Mr. Erskine, whose speech, had he before been obscure and unknown, would have raised him to an enviable height in his profession. Without any audacious assumption or presumptuous dictation, he maintained the general right of publication, founded on the inestimable privilege, the liberty of the press; and deprecated an arbitrary abridgment of that liberty in favour of any bodies, however high and respectable. In the progress of his argument, he exposed, with great wit and humour, the frivolities, the insufficiencies, and the blunders, which, from the negligence incident to the possession of a monopoly, had crept into and disfigured the publications of the chartered bodies. Such was the effect of his speech, that several members, who from affection to the seats of their early instruction, had come to the House with an intention to support the measure, added their suffrages to the number by which it was rejected*.

Bill lost.

3rd July. Termination of the session.

The session was concluded by a speech from the throne, thanking Parliament for their zeal in support of the war, and their attention to Ireland; the King's paternal affection for all his people making him sin-

* 60 to 40.

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gularly anxious for the happiness and prosperity of every part of his dominions. The events of the war had not afforded France any just cause to triumph in the consequences of perfidy; and whatever colour Spain might endeavour to put on her proceedings, his Majesty was conscious of having no cause for self-reproach; he exulted in the demonstrations of loyalty and affection displayed in Parliament, and considered it a happy omen of success in arms, that the increase of difficulties served only to augment the courage and constancy of the nation.

Rise and progress of the dispute with Spain.

From the moment that hostilities with France became apparent, many politicians sanguinely predicted that Spain would interfere. On general principles, this supposition was far from self-evident, and the particular circumstances of the case warranted a contrary conclusion. If the probability of war was sanctioned by the family compact, and the disposition of Spain to humble the pride and diminish the prosperity of Great Britain, the nature of the American contest afforded too many alarming topics of application, to permit the supposition that Spain would engage in the cause. Ever since the conclusion of peace, the dislike of the court of Madrid to Great Britain had been apparent in the discussions concerning the Manilla ransom, and the seizure of Falkland's Islands. In some disputes, too, in which Spain had been engaged with Portugal, the apprehension of English interference was strongly felt; and many discussions from time to time arose on the inevitable subject of illicit commerce and territorial encroachment: but none of these were sufficiently important to occasion a war. When our hostilities with the colonies began, Spain, like France and other powers, aided the Americans by underhand supplies, favoured their trade, shewed respect to their flag, and sought, by intrigues among the Indians, to enfeeble the efforts of Great Britain. General Wall gave to his sovereign a sound and rational opinion, that, if he meant to yield to resentment and the desire of recovering the losses of the last war, the present moment was very favourable;

but, upon principles of great and lasting policy, the success of the Americans would, in its consequences, be a most serious evil to Spain*. Count Florida Blanca, the Spanish Prime Minister, was also very explicit in expressing the pacific dispositions of his Court; and Prince Maserano strenuously exculpated himself from all charge of partiality toward the rebels, declaring that their success would afford a most pernicious example to the colonies of his nation; the Americans would be the worst neighbours they could possibly have†. In these and many other assurances made by the same parties, there was much dissimulation. Fear for his own provinces in America restrained the Spanish monarch; but, when he saw France decisively embarked, and when his peace with Portugal removed one cause of alarm, the mask he had thought it necessary to assume was worn with great laxity; the indirect assistance to the revolted colonies became more and more open; the reception, equipment, and refitting of their armed vessels in Spanish ports was undisguised; and their connexion with mercantile establishments was known and not disavowed.

To veil her real hostile intentions, Spain affected displeasure at not being consulted by France before the conclusion of her late treaty, averred that the alliance thus created was not contemplated in framing the family compact, and, without affecting to justify France, pretended a desire to restore tranquillity, and resorted to the usual device of offering a mediation. The Marquis D' Almadovar, who delivered his credentials as ambassador to the court of London after the capture of the French frigate by Admiral Keppel, gave the strongest assurances of his Catholic Majesty's desire to promote harmony, and cement the union between Great Britain and Spain by all proper ties. The ambassador observed that he had received his instructions anterior to the late transactions of the British fleet, but had no reason to believe that event would

17th June, 1778.

* Lord Stormont to Lord Weymouth, 25th September, 1777, State Papers.
† Lord Grantham to Lord Weymouth, 26th and 30th May, 1777.

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change the disposition of his court. France, nevertheless, consistently with her usual policy, assiduously circulated reports that Spain would accede to the treaty with America, and had authorized M. D'Aranda to complete the transaction*.

At several conferences with the Secretary of State, the Spanish ambassador pressed for some proposal which would enable his royal master to act as mediator between Great Britain and France, intimating that the intended good offices were neglected. Lord Weymouth observed that Spain had not proposed to mediate, but merely professed an inclination to receive an application from either power; France had offered an unexpiated insult to Great Britain; but still his Majesty, although earnestly desirous of peace, could not, consistently with the dignity of his crown, solicit the interference of a foreign court, till the views and intentions of the aggressor were known. These conversations were far from impressing a notion that Spain sought a quarrel; on the contrary, one of the subjects discussed was the means of forming a more intimate commercial connexion†.

28th Sept. In compliance with the intimation of Lord Weymouth, a paper was delivered on the part of his Catholic Majesty, offering to commence a negotiation, wherein the dignity of neither crown should seem affected by making the first advance; and, therefore, recommended that each court should remit to Madrid a state of its views and expectations, the King of Spain proposing to communicate to each the proposition of the other. The answer of the British court was comprised in a single article: Whenever France shall "withdraw all assistance and support from America, "notwithstanding the unprovoked aggression, the "King will be ready to restore peace and re-establish "amity and harmony." France demanded that the King should acknowledge the absolute independence of the thirteen provinces, cede all their territories in his possession, and withdraw all his forces. When these

27th Oct.

* Letter from Lord Weymouth to Lord Grantham, 21st July, 1778.
† Letter from Lord Weymouth to Lord Grantham, 13th September, 1778.

preliminaries were complied with, France proposed to settle and explain various points in former treaties, the previous discussion of which would be difficult and useless.

In imparting this proposal, the King of Spain hoped, notwithstanding the wide difference between the sentiments of the two powers, to find means of adjustment; and, in a subsequent dispatch, requested a revision of the article proposed by the British court, and the adoption of some expedient or temperament, more adapted to reconciliation. This the British ministry unanimously rejected. France, they observed, manifested no desire of peace; but, by insisting on the independence of America, sought only to perfect the blow she had attempted to strike. 16th Nov. 5th Dec. 29th Dec.

Both courts persisting in their original sentiments, the King of Spain, as an accommodating expedient, proposed three plans: First, a truce with the colonies for twenty-five or thirty years, during which a peace might be negotiated; and, in the mean time, the points in dispute between the courts of London and Versailles might also be adjusted. Secondly, a truce with France, including the colonies. Thirdly, an indefinite truce with the colonies and France, which should not terminate without a year's previous notice, during which the plenipotentiaries of the three parties might meet in Congress, with a fourth from the court of Madrid to mediate. Such a convention might be signed by the American deputies at Paris *sub spe rati*, the French court employ its good offices to obtain the ratification, and the crowns of Spain and France guarantee the stipulations. In the mean time the colonies were to trade freely with all the world, and maintain independence *de facto*, such as it was supposed the King's commissioners had power to offer them; the British forces were to be withdrawn, or at least much reduced, and their communications with the country regulated. 2nd Jan.

In a long and well-composed answer to this proposition, the British ministry reviewed the whole conduct and pretensions of France, exposed the perfidy which 16th March.

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dictated an interference in the contest, the fallacy of the pretences advanced during the negotiation, and the futility of their arguments when they alleged their own hostilities as the source of their apprehensions, and their apprehensions as the source of their hostilities. Considering the plans proposed by Spain as shortly and generally stated, according to the nature of an overture, they were analyzed with freedom, and the consequences accurately deduced. The grant of a truce for five-and-twenty or thirty years, or for an indefinite term, not to be determined without a year's notice, accompanied with an evacuation of the provinces (for nothing less could meet the terms proposed), and a free trade, would, in fact, be so effectual a concession of independence, that nothing could prevent the Americans from attaining that state, should the treaty terminate unfavourably. It would be such a dereliction of all right of government, such a sanction of all past proceedings in the colonies, as would reduce his Majesty's faithful subjects to the condition of rebels, and prevent any interference on their behalf. The degradation of Great Britain would also be complete, for the King must treat with France for inducing the colonies to accede; the American deputies might sign the treaty *sub spe rati*, but the good offices of France must be exerted to procure the ratification. After renouncing, or rather transferring to the Congress and France for so long a time the allegiance and loyalty of his faithful subjects, his Majesty was to treat with Congress for the surrender of their public character and government, and with France for her concurrence in such a measure, and at the same time for her peculiar interests, consisting in unspecified demands. These, whatever they might be, must doubtless be adjusted before France would concur in dissolving those states with whom she had contracted alliance and amity, for the purpose of obtaining her own points; but, as she neither specified her own objects, nor the endeavours she would use to re-establish the British constitution in America, the acceptance of such a truce could only be viewed as an absolute, if not a distinct,

cession of all rights of the British crown in the thirteen colonies, under the additional disadvantage of making it to the French, rather than to the Americans themselves.

To remove all doubts from the mind of the King of Spain respecting the points on which he might employ his good offices, the British ministry suggested that France should propose her grievances, jealousies, or demands. Great Britain would then give an answer equally explicit; or, a truce of sufficient duration might be made between Great Britain and France, for the adjustment of their rival pretensions, by the good offices of his Catholic Majesty. And to obviate every pretence for continuing hostilities on the side of North America, the insurgents might also propose their grievances, and the terms of security and precaution on which legal government might be restored. Or a truce might also take place in North America, that is, a real truce, an actual suspension of hostilities, during which the liberty and property of all orders and descriptions of men might be restored and secured, and every violence on their persons and estates wholly intermitted on each side. During such truces, the French ministers would be at liberty to treat for their own separate concerns, without incurring unavoidable suspicions, by mixing their own peculiar advantages with the supposed interests of those pretended allies, and his Majesty might settle the government of his own dominions without the appearance of receiving terms from an enemy.

On the basis of this proposition, the Spanish minister, M. De Florida Blanca, suggested, as the best means of accommodation, the suspension of arms and disarmament, the meeting of plenipotentiaries at Madrid for the adjustment of peace, and settlement of a definitive treaty, and plan of restitutions and arrangement of all causes of complaint between Great Britain and France, under the mediation of Spain. A reciprocal disarmament and suspension of hostilities was also to be separately granted to America through the same mediation, and American commissioners admitted

3rd April.

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to the negotiation; the truce was not to terminate till after a year's notice.

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4th May. This plan was delivered as the ultimatum of Spain; but, as it was founded on the principles which had already been disclaimed, the British court declared it inadmissible; acknowledging, at the same time, the benevolence of the King of Spain's interposition, and hoping, that should France be disposed to offer less imperious and unequal terms, the same good offices would be renewed.

4th May. In a private letter, which accompanied the above answer, Lord Weymouth stated, to the British ambassador, his alarms at the articles of the ultimatum, which indicated the prevalence of French influence in the councils of Spain. He had hitherto suppressed the suspicions which many circumstances tended to excite; but a full explanation was now necessary. Did Spain wish and insist on the dismemberment of Great Britain so earnestly as to engage in war for the purpose of effecting it? or, if not, what means had the proposal left for averting the event?

29th May. The behaviour of M. D'Almadovar did not justify the apprehensions disclosed in this dispatch; he expressed to the secretary of state the regret of the Catholic King in withdrawing his offered mediation, from a conviction that it could be attended with no effect; but nothing transpired which shewed a propensity to irritation on either side. At a subsequent interview, the Spanish ambassador renewed these expressions, lamented that all the propositions of Spain were refused, and no others substituted; and com-

11th June. plained of the words "imperious and unequal terms," in the dispatch of the fourth of May, as harsh and unnecessary. The explanation on all these points was full and satisfactory: the King had been precluded from offering terms of pacification, because the propositions made by France tended merely to secure the independence of the colonies by direct means, or the intermediate effect of a truce. The words which were complained of, obviously referred to France only, and not, in the most distant manner, to Spain. By M.

D'Almadovar's desire, Lord Grantham was directed to convey, through M. De Florida Blanca, to the King of Spain, the ardent wish of his Britannic Majesty for the re-establishment of peace, whenever it could be effected consistently with the regards due to his crown and people; his sincere sense of the friendly part taken by his Catholic Majesty, and his regret at the temporary failure of his efforts. If France had made demands immediately connected with her own interest, and those demands had been countenanced by the wishes of Spain, the King would have shewn, by his compliance, his desire of peace and regard for so respectable an interference; but the communications of the French court, having been confined to the interests of the rebellious colonies, with whom, in justice, they ought not to have had any connexion, the King could not renew pacific propositions: yet, if any were made by his Catholic Majesty, they would be received with the utmost regard, and examined with candour and attention. The re-establishment of peace, however desirable in itself, would receive additional value if effected by the mediation of Spain, as it would tend more closely to unite the two crowns, and produce advantages to both*.

16th June. In fact, this negotiation, protracted to a period of nine months, was a mere artifice devised by M. De Florida Blanca and the French minister in Spain, to gain time for completing naval and military preparations, forming treaties and perfecting intrigues with neutral powers, all which objects were assiduously pursued†. Before these obliging expressions could reach the court for which they were intended, and before any previous intimation could be received from any quarter, M. D'Almadovar received his instructions to quit London without taking leave, and delivered the paper which accompanied the King's message to Parliament. It asserted, most untruly, that Great Britain

Spanish ambassador withdraws.

His letter.

* For all these facts I have consulted the original correspondence between the Secretary of State and Lord Grantham, and other documents in the State Paper Office.

† Coxe's Memoirs of the Kings of Spain, vol. iii. p. 402; Florida Blanca's account of his administration, same, vol. i. p. 325.—State Papers.

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meditated an attack on Cadiz and the Philippine Isles, complained of the rejection of the Catholic King's benevolent interference, the violences committed on his dominions in the course of the war, and the neglect of his numerous applications for redress, and announced his resolution to seek reparation by the means with which God had intrusted him.

Spanish manifesto.

Beside this angry paper and two royal schedules to his own subjects, the Spanish Monarch published a manifesto, long, desultory, and feeble, complaining of the conduct of Britain in innumerable instances since the conclusion of peace. Violations of territory in the bay of Honduras, exciting the Indians to attack Spain, and refusal of redress on repeated applications, formed the leading subjects of crimination. Naval outrages were enumerated with a degree of affected precision, and denounced with a pompous vehemence which must have been ridiculous to all Europe. The insults offered by the British navy to the Spanish navigation and trade, from 1776 to the beginning of 1779, were "already eighty-six in number, including prizes taken "by unjust practices, piracy, and robberies of various "effects out of the vessels, attacks made by gun-firing, "and other incredible violences: since that period, "other injuries of the same kind had been added, suf- "ficient to justify the assertion that the grievances of "the late years did not fall much short of a hundred." England was also accused of endeavouring to effect a re-union with the American colonies, in order to arm them against the House of Bourbon; the whole history of the negotiation was perverted and misrepresented in many essential particulars; and it was asserted that while the boon of American independence was refused on the intercession of Spain, English emissaries were clandestinely proposing terms still more liberal to Dr. Franklin at Paris. The King of Spain, therefore, announced the necessity of curtailing and destroying the arbitrary proceedings and maxims of the English marine; in the attainment of which end, all other maritime powers, and even all nations, were become highly interested.

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To these empty publications, the court of Great Britain replied, by ordering letters of marque and reprisal against Spanish property, and by a judicious and temperate letter from Lord Weymouth to the Spanish ambassador. France also published a long historical manifesto, displaying the motives and conduct of the Most Christian King toward England, which was artfully drawn up, and well calculated to deceive; but was answered in an eloquent justificatory memorial, the production of the celebrated Gibbon*.

18th June. Letters of marque issued.

13th July. Lord Weymouth's letter.

French manifesto.

Thus was Spain, to use the expression, enlisted in the cause of France. Beside the general absence of any sufficient ground of provocation†, the ordinary views of policy offered many strong reasons against a rupture with Great Britain. The good sense of the Emperor had pointed out the impropriety of a sovereign arming in behalf of rebels; and Spain had motives of interest far more cogent for adopting similar sentiments. A bigoted attachment to the Catholic religion, and the vicinity of her American possessions to the English colonies, presented powerful objections against forming an alliance with, or in favour of, the rebels of America, whose hostile enterprizes and pernicious example were equal subjects of alarm. No sufficient inducement could be advanced to counterbalance these arguments; the Spaniards had no view of extending commerce, and their friendly disposition toward France might have been safely exerted in clandestine aids, in supplies of money, and agitating the English nation by continual reports of preparation and specious offers of mediatory interference.

Observations on the conduct of Spain.

* See all these last-mentioned pieces in the Annual Register for 1779, article State Papers. Gibbon's publication, though not official, called forth great exertions, both in France and among the adherents of America, to furnish an adequate reply. Some anonymous reflections were produced; some, avowed by M. Caron De Beaumarchais and others, were published by authority. See Remembrancer, vol. ix. p. 1, 83, 201; vol. x. p. 116.

† It is almost impossible that, in the state of British and Spanish possessions in different parts of the world, cause of complaint should not arise on both sides. A motion was made and a petition offered to the English Parliament, the 25th of February 1777; and, in a conversation between Lord Grantham and M. de Florida Blanca in 1778, some of the complaints adverted to in the manifesto were discussed; but the Spanish minister did not express any impatience on the subject, nor any doubt of fair and equitable redress. Letter from Lord Grantham to Lord Weymouth, 23rd November, 1778.

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With her usual dexterity, France had urged her ally to decide in favour of hostilities; and, before the resolution of Spain was formed, boasted of her success in such a manner as to embarrass the cabinet of Madrid, whose final determination was not marked with the promptitude of vigour, but the rashness of fear, flying into the arms of danger to escape the horrors of doubt. Five days before he delivered his orders to quit the British court, the Count d' Almadovar had not the slightest suspicion that his diplomatic mission was likely to terminate; and, while the French ambassador at Vienna loudly boasted the success of his court, in engaging a new enemy against Great Britain, the Spanish ambassador unreservedly declared he had not received any direct communication on the subject*.

Siege of Gibraltar commenced. 24th June.

Probably one of the allurements held out to Spain on this occasion was the recovering of Gibraltar; the desire to regain this fortress, natural in the mind of every Spaniard, operated on that of the King with unusual intensity: it was therefore immediately besieged. Orders were dispatched for discontinuing all commerce with the garrison; and a treaty was concluded with the Emperor of Morocco, which alienated him from England, and attached him to Spain. He let to them, as a farm, the ports of Tetuan, Tangiers, and Laroche: deposited a portion of his treasure in their country, as a pledge of his sincerity, and opened his ports to their ships; thus enabling them to reduce their garrisons on the African coast, and to diminish their artillery and magazines. It removed also the apprehension of great evils which would have ensued if England had incited them to attack Ceuta or Melilla, or, by cruizing in the straits, to derange measures for the blockade of the besieged fortress†.

16th June.

Soon after the declaration of hostilities, the Spaniards formed a naval blockade and commenced approaches by land. The garrison amounted to nearly six thousand men, in good health, full of vigour, and not deficient in provisions; they were commanded by

* Letter from Sir Robert Murray Keith to Lord Weymouth, 23rd June, 1779.
† Mr. Archdeacon Coxe's Memoirs, ubi supra.

the brave General Elliot, who justified their confidence in him, by a regular performance of his duties, by a prudence and penetration which discerned every circumstance, however minute, tending to the welfare and safety of his troops, and by a firmness of mind which rendered obedience easy, and command respectable†.

Ineffectual attempt on Jersey.

No martial enterprize of the French in Europe, no appearance of efficient preparation, served to encourage the Spaniards in their hostile determination. An ill-digested and inefficient attack on Jersey was easily repelled; and the failure of the attempt only exposed to ridicule the name of the projector, who was called the Prince de Nassau Siegen, and laid a disputable claim to descent from the illustrious house of Nassau.

May 1st.

4th June. Junction of the French and Spanish fleets.

Before the declaration of war with Spain, the French fleet, under D'Orvilliers, consisting of twenty-eight sail, but extremely defective in preparation, in the absence of the British squadron, gained the Spanish coast, and, after failing in an attempt to intercept a force under Admiral Darby, effected a junction with the armament of Spain.

Exertions in England.

The courage of the English nation was not daunted by the strong combination of enemies; a Spanish war was never unpopular, and the spirit of enterprize was universally prevalent. Individuals and public bodies entered into large subscriptions for raising troops, giving bounties to seamen, equipping privateers, and other patriotic purposes; volunteer associations were formed to repel invasion, and the East India Company, with becoming liberality, granted bounties for six thousand seamen, and undertook to build and equip three new ships, of seventy-four guns, for the royal navy.

The combined fleet insult the British coast.

But all these exertions were insufficient to give the English fleet a superiority over the united squadrons of the enemy: Sir Charles Hardy, who succeeded Admiral Keppel in the command, cruized in the

* In all details respecting the siege of Gibraltar, I have relied on the Historical Journal of Captain John Drinkwater.

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channel during the whole summer with about thirty-eight sail of the line. The enemy insulted the channel with an irresistible force, shewed themselves before Plymouth, where they created general apprehension, and captured the Ardent of sixty-four guns, whose commander mistook the united fleet for that of the British Admiral. Although alarm and agitation prevailed in England, the enemy undertook no important enterprize; jealousy prevailed between the commanders of the combined fleet, sickness committed dreadful ravages on the crews; and, at an early period of the year,

Sept.

they retired into Brest, having lost nearly ten thousand men, leaving the British trade almost unmolested.

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State of the French and English fleets in the West Indies.—Byron convoys the homeward-bound fleet.—The French take St. Vincent's and Grenada.—Engagement between Byron and d'Estaing.—Proceedings in Georgia.—Corps of loyalists raised.—American force collected.—The American Colonel Ashe routed.—Measures of the Americans for defence of the Carolinas.—Irruption of the British into South Carolina.—Attack of the Americans on St. John's Island.—D'Estaing's ineffectual attempt on Savannah.—Delays in reinforcing Sir Henry Clinton.—Various successful expeditions directed by him.—Siege and relief of Penobscot.—Miserable fate of the American besiegers.—Arrival of Arbuthnot.—Americans attack Paulus Hook.—Their expedition against the Indians.—Incursion of the Spaniards into West Florida.—Capture of Fort Omoa by the English—it is re-taken.—Senegal taken by the French—Goree by the English.—Sea fights between Captain Pierson and Paul Jones.—Captain Farmer and a French frigate.—State of the ministry—changes.—State of Ireland.—Increase of Volunteers.—Session of the Irish Parliament.—Debates on the address.—Popular measures—Limited Supply.—Riot in Dublin.

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6th Jan. State of the French and English fleets in the West Indies.

MEANWHILE the transatlantic war was carried on with various degrees of activity and success. The passage of Admiral Byron from North America to the West Indies was delayed by storms. His junction with Admiral Barrington gave an equality, if not a superiority, to the British force, which reduced the French commander to the defensive; and, during five months, neither insult nor opportunity could draw him

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from his retreat at Martinique. In this interval both fleets received reinforcements; the English under Admiral Rowley, the French under Count de Grasse; but both remained inactive, till Byron, sailing for St. Christopher's to escort the homeward-bound fleet, encouraged D'Estaing to commence operations. Trolong du Romain, with four thousand and fifty men, was dispatched against St. Vincent's, then in a miserable state of distraction. It had been recently created a separate government under Valentine Morris, Esquire, a gentleman of good family, benevolent spirit, and enlarged liberality*, but was not yet divided into parochial districts; the means of government were incomplete, the fortifications out of repair, the Charribs sullen and intractable, anxiously expecting an opportunity to restore the sovereignty of the French; while a rancorous party among the subjects of the Crown impeded the exertions of the governor, facilitated the machinations of the Charribs, and even maintained a traitorous correspondence with the enemy. The colony refused all assistance toward establishing a military force, and the English troops were composed, to use the governor's own expression, of "the very scum of "the earth; the refuse of the metropolis, the sweep-"ings of jails, lamp-lighters, gipsies, and men super-"annuated, disabled, and discharged from other regi-"ments." This motley force being ill calculated to oppose a numerous body of French troops, who landed and were joined by the Charribs, the governor was obliged to capitulate without resistance†.

6th June. Byron convoys the trade.

Capture of St. Vincent's by the French.

17th June.

2nd July.

D'Estaing, again reinforced by a division under La Motte Piquet, commanded thirty-four ships of war, twenty-six of which were of the line, and a number of transports sufficient for the conveyance of nine thousand soldiers. He proceeded to the attack of Grenada, which was defended only by a hundred and fifty regulars, and about four hundred militia, who, being principally Frenchmen, soon diminished the garrison,

Grenada also taken.

* See an interesting account of Valentine Morris, in Coxe's Historical Tour in Monmouthshire, chap. 40.

† Principally from Governor Morris's Narrative of his official conduct.

by desertions, to less than three hundred. Lord Macartney, the governor, considering this force sufficient for the defence of some strong posts till succours could arrive, refused to capitulate. D'Estaing, unwilling to sacrifice the time requisite for regular approaches, stormed the lines: the garrison once repulsed the assailants, but, being obliged to yield to numbers, retired into the fort, and had the mortification to see their own cannon turned against them. Lord Macartney proposed terms of capitulation, which the victor rejecting, proffered others so dishonourable, 4th. that the high-spirited governor preferred a surrender at discretion, and the French plundered without scruple or restraint.

A principal reason for pressing with such rapidity 1st July. Engagement between Byron and d'Estaing. the reduction of Grenada, was the intelligence of Admiral Byron's return, which had been retarded by winds and currents. He had formed, with General Grant, a project for the recovery of St. Vincent's; but 3rd July. receiving, while at sea, information that the French squadron before Grenada was reduced to nineteen sail, and that Lord Macartney could maintain his position a fortnight, he changed his first destination, and attempted to succour that island. Having twenty-one ships of the line, beside transports, he arranged his signals for bringing on a general action, and did not discover the fallacy of his intelligence till several of his vessels were engaged. D'Estaing, notwithstanding 6th. his superiority of force, and the great advantages he derived from the excellent condition of his fleet, avoided a close and general conflict, and, foiled in all attempts to cut off the transports and intercept the disabled vessels, retired in the night to Grenada. The British Admiral, conscious of his inferiority in strength, dispatched during the night his transports and disabled ships to St. Christopher's, and calmly awaited the morning's attack, which, judging by his own character, he deemed inevitable. The returning dawn discovered to him the retreat of the enemy, and seeing the white flag mounted on the forts of Grenada,

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he followed the transports to refit at St. Christopher's*. A general panic was now diffused through the British West Indies; D'Estaing had boasted his resolution to conquer every island, and that he was even prepared with articles of capitulation for each†; but he soon relieved the inhabitants from their apprehensions, by retiring from Grenada to Cape Francois in Hispaniola.

Proceedings in Georgia.

After taking Savannah, in Georgia, and driving the American troops across the river into South Carolina, General Prevost and Colonel Campbell assiduously employed themselves in receiving the inhabitants under protection, forming military corps, and framing regulations for the peace and security of the province. Their efforts, however, were not confined to these operations; a successful expedition was undertaken against Sunbury, a fort which surrendered at discretion, yielding to the victors a considerable quantity of ordnance and stores, with two hundred and twelve prisoners. This exploit was only preparatory to the capture of Augusta, the second town in the province, by Colonel Campbell, many of the inhabitants taking oaths of fidelity, and forming military corps, under the British government. Colonel Hamilton, with a detachment of two hundred men, made a circuit of the province, for the purpose of encouraging these dispositions and disarming the disaffected; he met with considerable success, though he occasionally discovered latent treachery. To encourage loyalists, they were to receive the same allowances with other American levies, and, in addition, free grants of a hundred acres of land. The chief object of this expedition was to open the back country, to bring to the test the repeated professions of loyalty made by the inhabitants, and by the presence of military support to

9th Jan. Capture of Sunbury;

and Augusta.

Corps of loyalists raised.

* D'Estaing's alarm was so great, that he would not even venture to take possession of the Lion of 64 guns, commanded by Captain Cornwallis, and the Cornwall of 74, Captain Edwards, which were dismasted and lying helpless between the two fleets. He afterwards appeared off St. Christopher's, but would not venture to attack the British fleet, which was drawn up in readiness to receive him.

† Valentine Morris's Narrative, p. 73.

encourage and countenance those who were disposed to take up arms: these hopes were greatly disappointed; the rising was not general; the inertness of the parties was increased by the apprehension of a strong American force on the other side of Hudson's river*. When Colonel Campbell's circuit was completed, a body of five hundred South Carolina militia, under Colonel Pickens, encountered him, but were put to flight; a number of loyalists from the interior of North Carolina, embodied under Colonel Boyd, endeavoured to force their way to Georgia to join the royal forces; but Pickens defeated them at Kettle Creek, with considerable loss, including their commander; about three hundred reached Georgia; others returned and threw themselves on the mercy of their country, but were prosecuted as traitors to the new government; seventy were condemned, but only five executed†.

Loyalists routed in North Carolina.

It was soon found that Augusta could not be retained without great difficulty and danger, as it was a hundred and fifty miles distant from the main army. To defend both Carolinas, the Americans hastily collected about three thousand militia, under Generals Ashe and Rutherford; but soon afterward placed them under the direction of General Lincoln. They issued proclamations, prohibiting the people from joining the royal standard, and for securing the cattle, and stretched their positions along the northern bank of the Savannah River, parallel to those of the British on the other side. General Ashe, with a detachment of fifteen hundred men, was ordered to strengthen the post opposite Augusta; but, finding that fort abandoned, he crossed the river to straiten the British quarters. Lieutenant-Colonel Prevost, brother of the General, crossing the Bier Creek fifteen miles above Ashe's encampment, stole on his rear unperceived, and totally routed and dispersed his force, with the loss of

American force collected.

3rd March. Colonel Ashe routed.

* Lord George Germaine to Colonel Campbell, 16th January, 1779. Colonel Prevost to Lord G. Germaine, 5th March, 1779.

† The American writers describe these loyalists as mere outlaws; but their application of the word tory was so descriptive of every thing base and wicked, that other circumstances of guilt might be superadded without much intention to violate truth. See Ramsay, vol. ii. p. 118.

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seven pieces of cannon, several stand of colours, almost all the arms, artillery, and baggage; a hundred and fifty were killed on the field, a far greater number drowned in endeavouring to escape, and two hundred were made prisoners. The whole party had been augmented by reinforcements to about two thousand; but not more than four hundred and fifty rejoined Lincoln.

Measures of the Americans for the defence of the Carolinas. 23rd April.

Alarmed by approaching danger, the legislature of South Carolina invested their governor, John Retledge, and his council, with unlimited powers to act for the public good. This authority was vigorously employed in reinforcing Lincoln, who soon found himself at the head of five thousand men. Leaving one thousand under Colonel Mackintosh and General Moultrie, to garrison Purysburg and Black Swamp, he began his march up the Savannah. Colonel Prevost, in hopes of inducing him to return, crossed over with the greatest part of his army into South Carolina, the detachments under Mackintosh and Moultrie retiring before him, or offering only a feeble resistance; the American General, however, proceeded on his march, notwithstanding the frequent expresses which arrived demanding his presence. Lured by intelligence of the defenceless state of Charlestown, Prevost resolutely advanced, reached the suburbs, and summoned the town; the inhabitants, who during his approach had been assiduously employed in improving their fortifications, and were reinforced by Moultrie's retreating detachment, by bodies of militia and Pulaski's legion, contrived to consume a day in messages and answers relative to the terms of surrender; but their ultimatum being declared inadmissible, they passed the night in the horrors of an expected storm. Fear was however the only injury they sustained. Prevost, calculating the strength of the works, the insufficiency of his force, his want of artillery, ammunition, and forage, and the probability of Lincoln's intercepting his retreat, wisely drew off his forces in the night, and, without molestation, gained John's Island, where he awaited supplies from New York. Lincoln having established a post

Irruption of the British into South Carolina.

Ineffectual attempt on Charlestown. 10th May.

at Augusta, retired by hasty marches to Charlestown, and, till the departure of the British troops, established his head-quarters at Dorchester.

1779.

Attack of the Americans on St. John's Island. 16th June.

Colonel Prevost, having fortified Stonyferry, which maintains the communication with the main land, soon left St. John's Island to be defended by Colonel Maitland, with only five hundred effective men. General Lincoln, who had already once failed, now advanced with nearly five thousand men to dislodge the British troops, but was repelled by the judicious and resolute exertions of this disproportioned force. In the course of the action, the garrison were destitute of ammunition; but Captain Moncrieff, of the engineers, obtained a supply by a spirited sally; and, at the close of the engagement, their last charge was actually in their pieces.

20th.

Soon after this attack, the American militia, disheartened and impatient of a longer absence from their plantations, quitted the army; the hot and sickly season rendering repose indispensable, the Americans retired to Sheldon; the British force, evacuating the post at Stonyferry, established a new one at Beaufort, in the island of Port Royal, and the main body, returning into Georgia, continued upward of two months in unmolested inactivity. The advantages attending the expedition into South Carolina were the establishment of a post at Beaufort, and the acquisition of provisions, the want of which began to be severely felt.

Ineffectual Attempts of D'Estaing on Savannah. September.

While hostilities were thus suspended, the Americans made application to D'Estaing, with the hope that his fleet would destroy the advantages which accrued to the English from their naval superiority. The French admiral speedily arrived with twenty sail of the line, two of fifty guns, eleven frigates, and a considerable number of transports, and surprised the Experiment, of fifty guns, with two storeships, and the Ariel frigate.

The Americans made great efforts to co-operate with the French, and the British general spared no exertion to repel an attack which he expected on

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Savannah; the garrison was withdrawn from Sunbury, Colonel Maitland was ordered to evacuate Beaufort, and the small naval force was judiciously

11th. disposed by Captain Henry. When the French troops were disembarked, D'Estaing, without awaiting the junction of his provincial allies, in language ridiculously boastful summoned Savannah to surrender to the French King. Prevost gained four-and-twenty hours for deliberation, during which Colonel Maitland arrived with eight hundred men, after surmounting incredible difficulties; and the Governor, thus reinforced, announced his resolution to defend the fort.

23rd. Twelve days were consumed in preparations, before the French broke ground, during which the garrison annoyed them by two vigorous and successful sorties.

4th to 9th October. The French and American troops, amounting to upward of ten thousand, continued an ineffectual cannonade during five days, while the whole garrison, even to the African slaves, vied in zeal and perseverance in strengthening the works, and mounting artillery.

9th. Wearied at length with the delay of regular approaches, considering the dangers of the hurricane season, and the possibility of a British squadron attacking his fleet, while so great a part of his artillery was employed on shore, D'Estaing attempted to take the place by storm. Four thousand five hundred men, more than double the number of the garrison, were divided into two columns, one of which, under D'Estaing, assisted by General Lincoln, was to attack in front; while the other, under Count Dillon, was to gain the rear of the British lines. They were put in motion several hours before day. Dillon's division fortunately mistook the road, became entangled in a swamp, and was so galled by an incessant and well-directed fire from the garrison, that they could not form. The column led by D'Estaing was repulsed, after maintaining a severe conflict, hand to hand, for possession of the principal redoubt. The Admiral was slightly wounded, and the Polish volunteer, Pulaski,

killed*. The conflict, which lasted two hours, was unusually destructive. By the accounts of their own officers, the French lost fifteen hundred men; the Americans, more cautious in disclosures, acknowledged fifty-two officers, but concealed the number of privates. Of the garrison, not more than forty-two were killed or wounded. Such a slaughter, it was observed, had not taken place in America since Bunker's Hill. The siege was forthwith raised; the Americans retired to South Carolina, and the French regained their shipping without molestation, as the garrison was not sufficiently numerous to adventure a pursuit. Their fleet was shortly afterward dispersed by a storm; part returned to the West Indies; and D'Estaing regained his native land. This boastful commander was always distinguished by injustice and cruelty. His presumptuous mode of summoning the garrison disgusted the Americans; and his cruelty in refusing to permit the women and children to take refuge on board English ships in his own custody, was rendered additionally contemptible by his endeavouring, after defeat, to throw the blame on his allies, and offering the very favour he had before withheld, which General Prevost rejected with becoming disdain. The raising of this siege terminated hostilities in the south†.

Delays in reinforcing Clinton. 2nd May.

During this whole campaign, Sir Henry Clinton remained in anxious expectation of reinforcements, the arrival of which was delayed by an extraordinary occurrence. They were proceeding down the British channel, under the convoy of Admiral Arbuthnot,

* Pulaski was one of the conspirators who attempted to carry off the King of Poland in 1771. Coxe's Travels in Poland, Russia, Sweden, and Denmark, b. i. c. 3.

† While the siege of Savannah was pending, a remarkable enterprize was effected by Colonel John White, of the Georgia line. Captain French had taken post, with about a hundred men, near the river Ogechee, some time before the siege began. There were also at the same place, forty sailors on board five British vessels, four of which were armed. All these men, together with the vessels, and 130 stand of arms, were surrendered to Colonel White, Captain Elholm, and four others, one of whom was the Colonel's servant. In the night, this small party kindled a number of fires in different places, and adopted the parade of a large encampment, by which, and other deceptive stratagems, they impressed Captain French with an opinion that nothing but an instant surrender, in conformity to a peremptory summons, could save his men from being cut to pieces by a superior force. Ramsay, vol. ii. p. 122.

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but, on receiving intelligence of the French attack on Jersey, he ordered the transports into Torbay, and sailed for the relief of that island. On his arrival off Guernsey, he learned the repulse of the enemy, and hastened to accomplish his original destination; but when he returned to Torbay, the wind became unfavourable, and the troops arrived in America too late for the performance of any considerable enterprize.

April. Various successful expeditions directed by him.

Admiral Gambier being recalled in the spring, the command of the British fleet in America devolved on Sir George Collier, an officer who had honourably distinguished himself on the Halifax station, in restraining the Americans from invading Nova Scotia, alarming their coast, and distressing their trade. With

May.

this brave officer, Sir Henry Clinton planned an expedition to the Chesapeak, where large stores of tobacco, the chief means of maintaining the credit of Congress, were accumulated, and from which place the army in the middle colonies was principally, if not wholly, supported with salted provisions, the produce of Virginia and North Carolina. A detachment, amounting to eighteen hundred men, was embarked on board transports, and convoyed by the Raisonnable of sixty-four guns, four sloops, a galley, and some private ships of war. Their first attack was directed against Portsmouth, where they demolished a fort; expeditions were then made to Norfolk, Gosport, Kemp's Landing, and Suffolk, where great quantities of stores were seized,

29th May.

many vessels taken and several destroyed. To prevent a capture, a marine yard was burned, with all its timber; and the fleet returned in twenty-four days to New York, having destroyed and taken a hundred and twenty-seven vessels, and other property, estimated at half a million sterling.

30th.

When the detachment returned from Virginia, they were joined by troops already embarked on board transports, and, proceeding up the North river, succeeded in capturing Stony Point, Fort La Fayette, and Verplank's Neck, without loss. These posts were situate on opposite sides of Hudson's river, about sixty miles from New York, and the expedition was

sufficiently important to claim the presence of Sir George Collier and the Commander-in-Chief.

1779.

Two thousand six hundred men, under Major-General Tryon and Major Grant, were next employed in an expedition against Connecticut, a principal source of strength to Congress, well peopled, and abounding in provisions. The motives of the attempt were to convince the enemy that this favoured province was not unassailable, and to force General Washington from his strong situation on the North river, into the low country, for defence of the sea-coast. The troops possessed themselves of Newhaven, the capital of the colony, seized the artillery, ammunition, and public stores, and all the vessels in the harbour. A proclamation, inviting the people to return to their allegiance, was disregarded; the troops were fired at from the windows, after they were in possession of the town, and even the sentinels placed to protect private property were wounded on their posts; yet the town was spared, and no plunder allowed; after dismantling the fort, the troops re-embarked and proceeded to Fairfield. 4th July.

At this place they found a resistance more rancorous than at Newhaven, and as their lenity produced so bad a return, Fairfield, Norwalk, and Greenfield were successively destroyed*, and in nine days the Commodore returned to confer with Sir Henry Clinton on a projected operation against New London. 13th July.

The people of Connecticut were dissatisfied at the apparent neglect of General Washington, and indifference of Congress, while these ravages were effected, and apprehensions were entertained of a revolt; but their hopes were re-animated by the surprise of Stony Point. General Wayne achieved this exploit with great judgment and valour; he stormed the works, and, although the nature of the opposition would have justified extremities, he generously forebore his rights as victor, and no man was killed but in battle. Fort 16th.

* In resentment of these ravages, Congress resolved, "To direct their "marine committee to take the most effectual measures to carry into execution "their manifesto of October 30th, 1778, by burning or destroying the towns "belonging to the enemy in Great Britain, or the West Indies;" but their resolve was never carried into effect.

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la Fayette was also attacked; but, before any considerable progress was made, the Americans, alarmed at the vigorous preparations of Sir Henry Clinton, evacuated Stony Point, after doing as much damage as their short possession would allow.

18th July.

Relief sent to Penobscot.

The attention of Sir George Collier and Sir Henry Clinton was now diverted from the meditated attack on New London, by the necessity of affording succour to a British establishment in the Bay of Penobscot, made by General Francis Maclean, with six hundred and fifty men, and three ships of war. The settlement was formed to check the incursions of the enemy into Nova Scotia, and obtain ship timber for the King's yards at Halifax and in other parts of America. The executive government of Massachuset's Bay, by laying an embargo on all the shipping at Boston, and offering large bounties, levied a squadron of nineteen armed ships and brigantines carrying from thirty-two to ten guns, twenty-seven transports, and three thousand troops. General Maclean was only apprised of the designs of the enemy four days before their arrival; he had not completed any part of his fortifications; but, by the indefatigable industry and zealous emulation of the sea and land forces, he succeeded in keeping this formidable and disproportionate equipment at bay during twenty-one days, perfecting, in the mean time, his defences, and harassing the invaders by continual alarms and frequent enterprizes. At length he received information, from a deserter, that on the ensuing day a general attack would be made by land and sea: every preparation was adopted for repelling it; but in the morning the garrison had the satisfaction to perceive that the invaders had deserted their works, and were shipping their artillery, and evacuating the place. The welcome cause of this sudden movement was the fleet under Sir George Collier, to which the whole American armament would have been an easy prey; but most of the vessels were burned to prevent a capture. The crews and soldiers thus landed in a desert country, above a hundred miles from human habitation, without provisions, soon proceeded to con-

17th June.

July.

21st.

13th August.

14th.

Miserable fate of the Americans.

1779.

tentions; fifty or sixty were slain in a pitched battle, and a much greater number perished miserably in the woods*.

Arrival of Arbuthnot.

This exploit terminated Sir George Collier's command. At the period when Admiral Arbuthnot arrived, a rumour that D'Estaing intended to attack New York, compelled Sir Henry Clinton to concentrate his forces and evacuate Rhode Island. The inactivity of General Washington, during the whole summer, occasioned some animadversions and even dissatisfaction among the Americans; but it displayed only his characteristic judgment and prudence. He had submitted to Congress three plans for the campaign, one defensive, which he most cordially recommended, and which the military and financial state of the country proved to be indispensably necessary. The only enterprize attempted by Washington's army, was an attack on Paulus Hook, on the Jersey shore, from which, after a temporary success, they were expelled withot effecting any material injury; of the whole proceeding, Clinton says in his official dispatch: "their retreat was as dis- "graceful as their attack had been spirited and well "conducted." They carried off forty prisoners.

20th Aug. Americans' attack on Paulus Hook.

Their expeditions against the Indians.

Several expeditions were made against the Indians, in which the Americans took severe revenge for the injuries of which they complained, and proved that they had nothing to learn in the art of savage and deliberate cruelty†.

August. Incursion of the Spaniards into West Florida.

As soon as war with Spain was announced, the independence of the British colonies was proclaimed at New Orleans; and Don Bernardo de Galves, governor of Louisiana, made an incursion into West Florida, which was but thinly inhabited, and for the protection of which, against the Americans, a force of eighteen hundred men had been collected under General John Campbell. The Spaniards, with two thousand men, in-

21st Sept.

* See the Journal of the Siege of Penobscot, 8vo.

† Beside Stedman and the other historians whom I have generally followed, see Sparks's Life of Washington, vol. i. c. 12. Congress acknowledged their sense of the General's services in this year, by a vote, thanking him "for the "vigilance, wisdom, and magnanimity with which he had conducted their mili- "tary operations." Same, p. 325.

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vested a fort built for defence of the frontier, near the mouth of the Ibberville, garrisoned with five hundred troops, which they captured after a siege of nine days; and in its fall was involved the fate of all the British settlements on the Mississippi, from the Natches downward; honourable terms of capitulation were granted. It will prevent the necessity of recurring to this topic, to anticipate, that in the ensuing year the Spaniards made a fresh incursion into the province, and captured Fort Mobile, after an honourable resistance.

Jan. to March 1780.

They attack the logwood-cutters in the Bay of Honduras.

With equal eagerness, they commenced hostilities against the British log-wood cutters, in the Bay of Honduras, many of whom they took prisoners and treated with great barbarity, expelling the remainder from their principal settlement at St. George's Key. Governor Dalling dispatched Captain Dalrymple with a small party of Irish volunteers to the Musquito shore, to collect a force, and convey arms for the assistance of the log-wood cutters. When he had perfected this part of his task, he met, at sea, a squadron of three frigates under Commodore Luttrel; and as St. George's Key had already been recaptured, the commodore and Dalrymple projected an attack on Fort Omoa, the key to the whole settlement of Honduras. The land force, which, including the marines and musquetrymen from the ships, did not exceed five hundred, endeavoured to surprise the fort, but, being discovered, were reduced to the necessity of making regular approaches. After some days fruitlessly expended, it was resolved, notwithstanding the great strength of the fortifications, to attempt an escalade. Hardly were the ladders pitched, when the assailants, only one hunded and fifty in number, were discovered, and a tremendous fire opened; one ladder was destroyed, but, by means of the others, two seamen gained the summit of the wall and presented their pieces, without firing, till the rest ascended. No persuasions of their officers could keep the astonished and terrified Spaniards to their stations, and the governor, at length, humbly supplicating for his life and that of his followers, surrendered the keys and his sword. The prisoners were three hundred and

Capture of Fort Omoa by the English.

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16th Oct.

thirty-five; the treasure had been removed, but a galleon captured in the harbour was valued at three millions of piastres. The Spaniards offered to redeem, at any price, two hundred and fifty quintals of quicksilver, which were on board their vessels, and made liberal proposals for ransoming the fort; both were refused by the victors, who, preferring the public good to private emolument, generously restored the church plate, which formed a considerable part of their booty, to procure the emancipation of their countrymen taken at St. George's Key, and detained in oppressive captivity at Merida. All these acts of heroism and disinterestedness produced, however, no permanent advantage. The victors could not afford a sufficient garrison; on the departure of the ships of war, the Spaniards assailed the fort, which an epidemical fever and the fatigue of duty obliged the English to evacuate, after spiking the guns, and destroying the military stores.

It is retaken.

Early in the year, the settlement of Senegal was captured by a French squadron, under M. De Vaudreuil. Goree, being evacuated for the purpose of fortifying Senegal, was occupied by a British force, left for that purpose by Sir Edward Hughes.

Feb. Senegal taken by the French; Goree by the English.

In general, the British commerce was amply protected, while that of the enemy suffered grievously in every quarter. The Baltic fleet, convoyed by Captain Pierson, in the Serapis of forty-four, and Captain Piercy, in the Countess of Scarborough of twenty guns, was chased on the northern coast of England by a squadron consisting of the Bon Homme Richard of forty guns, two frigates of thirty-six and thirty-two, a brig of twelve guns, and an armed cutter fitted out at L'Orient, and commanded by Paul Jones, who had obtained a commission in the American service. When this armament came in sight, Captain Pierson made a signal for his convoy to disperse and gain the nearest ports, in which they fortunately succeeded, while the two brave commanders, with their diproportionate force, encountered the enemy. Jones, after making some attemps to board, brought the Bon Homme Richard and the Serapis into such a situation, that the

23rd Sept. Sea-fight between Captain Pierson and Paul Jones.

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muzzles of their guns came in contact with the sides of the opposed ships. The conflict lasted three hours. Jones fought with desperate resolution; Captain Pierson with valour not less determined, but tempered by a merciful regard to the lives exposed under his command. After the Serapis had been several times set on fire by combustibles thrown from the Bon Homme Richard, all the officers and men stationed abaft the main-mast blown up by the explosion of some cartridges, and the guns in that quarter rendered unserviceable, Captain Pierson, seeing himself raked fore and aft by another frigate, to which he could oppose no resistance, struck his colours. The Countess of Scarborough, after a conflict not less resolute, though not equally dreadful, against an enemy of far superior force, was also obliged to yield. The loss on board the Serapis was not perfectly ascertained, but undoubtedly very great: Captain Pierson estimated it at forty-nine killed and sixty-eight wounded, and the main-mast went by the board immediately after the action; but the carnage on board the Bon Homme Richard was almost unprecedented; her quarter and counter on the lower deck were driven in, and all the guns on that deck dismounted; she was on fire in two places, and had seven feet water in the hold; while the deck streamed with the blood of three hundred and thirty-six men, being three-fourths of the whole crew, who were killed and wounded in the action. The ship sunk in two days, and the commander was received, with his prizes, in the ports of Holland*.

* The French minister, M. De Sartine, publicly expressed the King's approbation of Paul Jones, and conferred on him the cross of merit. Congress, with far greater propriety, acknowledged his zeal, prudence, and activity, by a vote of thanks, and promoted him to the command of a new ship, called the America. Remembrancer, vol. xiii. p. 107. As Paul Jones has been elevated, by writers of history, biography, and fiction, into the rank of a hero, it is thought necessary to give a brief outline of his character and proceedings, extracted chiefly from very friendly Memoirs of him, published in Edinburgh, in 1830. He was a native of Arbigland, in Kirkcudbright, in Scotland. The surname of his family was Paul, and by that name he called himself up to the year 1770; but, about three years afterward, for what reason does not appear, he superadded to his proper appellatives, John Paul, that of Jones. In early life, he was apprenticed to the master of a trading vessel, who, being unfortunate in his speculations, gave him up his indentures, and left him a free agent at the age of nineteen. From this period, he engaged in various capacities on board merchant vessels, and acquired know-

1779.

6th Oct. Resolute action of Captain Farmer.

Another naval action, redounding to the honour of the British flag, was fought by Captain Farmer of the Quebec, assisted by the Rambler cutter, against a French frigate and cutter of superior force, in which the Quebec was burnt, and her brave commander,

ledge in nautical matters, and reputation as an expert and able seaman; but these attainments were so little favoured, that, at the period when he changed his name, he was living in retirement and penury in Virginia. From this state, the troubles in America enabled him to emerge. He embraced with ardour the cause of that country, which he adopted as his own; and, in December, 1775, was appointed by Congress senior lieutenant, under Captain Saltonstall, of the Alfred, lying before Philadelphia. Jones was soon entrusted with command, as Captain of the sloop Providence, with discretionary powers as to the exploits he should undertake. In this and other vessels he sometimes fought at sea, sometimes plundered on shore, always brave, vigilant, and generally successful; but, for reasons which are not pointed out, he received affronts as well as plaudits from his employers, being honoured with acknowledgments and thanks, and yet superseded by junior officers. In May, 1777, his remonstrances, his projects, and the general effect of his character, induced Congress to send him to their commissioners in Paris, with a positive order "to invest him with the command of a fine ship, as a reward of "his zeal and the signal services he had performed in vessels of little force." Consistently with the fraudulent course at that time pursued by the French government, he was ordered, while on the coast or in a port of France, to keep his guns covered and concealed, and to make as little warlike appearance as possible. With these instructions, and a general commission as captain in the American navy, and not, as hitherto, commander of any single ship only, he sailed from Portsmouth in Virginia to Carolina, and afterward to France, and arrived at Nantes late in the year. He entered into speedy communications with the American commissioners; and Dr. Franklin, duly appreciating his character, and pleased with a plan which he laid down for the proceedings of d'Estaing, endeavoured to obtain for him the command of the Indien, a large frigate, then building for the service of the United States at Amsterdam; but this attempt failed, and he returned to the Ranger, the vessel in which he had arrived, and commenced a predatory expedition, in which he was extremely fortunate, taking many prizes at sea, and executing some hazardous exploits of burning and plundering on shore, particularly at Whitehaven, and at St. Mary's Isle, in the neighbourhood of the scenes of his early life, where he carried off the plate and property of the Earl of Selkirk. (After many years, the plate was restored).

In all these transactions, Jones was considerably thwarted by a disorderly and almost mutinous disposition in his own crew, and by frequent displays of incivility, amounting to contempt, from French officers with whom he came in contact. After a series of solicitations, of offers not to be accepted, and of expectations capriciously disappointed, in February, 1779, the French government appointed him to the command of a ship of forty guns. Her name had been the *Duc de Duras*, but, in compliment to his firm and constant friend, Dr. Franklin, he changed it to *Le Bon Homme Richard*; poor Richard being the title under which Franklin had issued one of his most popular productions; and this was the vessel in which he maintained the fight above commemorated.

It will be necessary in a future page to revert to the name of Paul Jones; but after being, up to the time of his engagement with Captain Pierson, the terror of a portion of Great Britain, and the admiration of many who are ready to elevate a successful adventurer into a great man, he fell into disregard and almost inaction. The British government denominated him a traitor, a pirate, and a robber; and Frenchmen of birth and honour were not fond of associating with him, either in command or in society. An impartial writer sums up his character in these terms:—"Paul Jones was brave at sea, but not on land; for more than once he refused to fight a duel, and was caned on the Exchange at Philadelphia. He was, besides, very ignorant, and quite unequal to the command of more than one ship." Castéra. Histoire de Catherine II. tome iii. p. 39.

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persisting in his resolution to be the last man to quit the ship, lost his life. With due attention to such merit, his son was created a baronet, and pensions were settled on the widow and children.

State of the ministry.

While such was the varying aspect of the war, the ministry were embarrassed, dispirited and dissatisfied. From motives of liberality, they had employed, in the military and naval service, men hostile to their measures, who, instead of palliating the miscarriages of the war, increased, by their own complaints, the public uneasiness and the clamour of party. Thus, while the extent and importance of the contest were continually augmenting, the friends of administration were daily becoming lukewarm, or even deserting their cause. Some felt consternation at the magnitude of the crisis, some gave ear to prophecies of final ill-success, and some changed their party from motives of fickleness, or from a conviction that the ministry would not be long able to pursue their present measures.

3rd June. 1778. Changes.

March, 1779.

Several changes were made in the cabinet: Mr. Thurlow receiving the great seal, with the dignity of peerage, sate during the late session as Chancellor. His vigorous mind and stern manly sense rendered great service to the government, and his firmness and ability often gave a beneficial impulse to the decisions of the cabinet. Mr. Wedderburne obtained the vacant situation of Attorney-General, and Mr. Wallace succeeded him as Solicitor-General. The office of Secretary of State for the northern department had continued unoccupied since the decease of Lord Suffolk, though its duties were performed by Lord Weymouth, secretary for the southern department; that nobleman now resigned his post, to which Lord Hillsborough was appointed; the office of Lord Suffolk was conferred on Lord Stormont, late ambassador at Paris; and the Earl of Carlisle was nominated First Lord of Trade and Plantations.

27th Oct.

24th Nov.

Increase of Irish volunteers.

Ministers were dissatisfied at the failure of the operations which they intended to promote by sending succours to the West Indies: the conduct of Admiral

Arbuthnot was generally applauded; but the consequences were highly unfortunate, and it was lamented that a campaign of such great expense should be consumed almost in inaction*. The insults offered to the coast, and alarm excited by the combined fleet in the Channel, were in themselves sufficiently distressing; but they produced another effect not less embarrassing, by the encouragement they afforded to the volunteer associations in Ireland. Combining the alarm of invasion† with the hope of procuring from the weakness and distraction of Great Britain some important concessions, the popular leaders of Irish politics gave every encouragement to these levies; the Duke of Leinster accepted the command of the Dublin corps, men of fortune and family bore muskets in the ranks, and contempt and derision were the portion of those who refused their services. The number of volunteers was stated at sixty thousand. They were clothed, accoutred, and, for the most part, armed at their own expense, or by public subscription; their officers received no commissions from government, but were elected and might be cashiered by their own soldiers. They executed all the duties of police, in preserving order and restraining crime, and the utmost tranquillity prevailed in all parts of the kingdom‡.

* Gibbon's Posthumous Works, vol. i. p. 540.

† Flood's Correspondence, p. 105.

‡ Ample details on the formation and growth of this body will be found in Plowden, vol. i. p. 487; Barrington's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 44, 110; and Grattan's Life, vol. ii. p. 343. Lord Sheffield, in his "Observations on the present State "of Ireland," published in 1785, gives the following account of these extraordinary associations: "It is necessary to notice a phenomenon which now began "to appear. The like never has been observed in any country, at least where "there was an established government. To describe it strictly, it may be called "an army, unauthorized by the laws and uncontrolled by the government of "the country; but it was generally known by the name of Volunteers of Ireland. "Their institution bore some semblance of a connexion with the executive "power. Arms belonging to the state, and stored under the care of the lieu-"tenants of counties, were delivered to them, upon the alarm of foreign invasion. "So far they seemed to be countenanced by government; but in a short time, they "caused no little jealousy and uneasiness. The arms issued from the public "stores were insufficient to supply the rapid increase of the volunteers. The "rest were procured by themselves, and the necessary accoutrements, with a con-"siderable number of field-pieces. It answered the purpose of opposition in "both countries to speak highly of them, and the supporters of government in "both countries mentioned them with civility. The wonderful efforts of England "in America were somehow wasted to no purpose of decision. American suc-"cess inflamed grievances which had been long felt in Ireland. Ireland, in truth,

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1879. Non-importation agreements.

The pretension now advanced was "a free trade "with all the world;" and, in support of it, the non-importation agreements were enforced, and public resolutions passed for confining the people to the use of their own manufactures, "until all partial restrictions "on trade, imposed by the illiberal and contracted "policy of the sister-kingdom, were removed." The press issued, with freedom and boldness, the same sentiments; all the disadvantages arising from the connexion with England were recapitulated with acrimony; and the conduct of government, and of the commercial part of the nation, was depicted as replete with cruelty, selfishness, tyranny, and contempt*.

12th Oct. Session of the Irish Parliament.

Under these circumstances, it occasioned much animadversion, that the Parliament was not convened at the earliest possible period; the state of the public mind could not fail to influence its proceedings. The Earl of Buckinghamshire, the Lord-Lieutenant, at length opened the session with a conciliatory speech, assuring both Houses that, amidst the cares and solicitudes inseparable from a state of hostility, the King had directed his attention to the interests and distresses of Ireland: he had remitted a large sum in specie† for the defence of the kingdom, and would cheerfully co-operate in promoting the common welfare of all his subjects. The decline of the revenue and arrears of government were mentioned, the volunteer associations approved, and the attention of the legislature directed to domestic regulations, particu-

"had infinitely more cause for complaint, and had been infinitely more oppressed, "than America; the latter had never submitted to half the hurtful restrictions in "which the other had for many years quietly acquiesced. But now, petitions, "remonstrances, popular resolves, and parliamentary addresses were vigorously "urged, and in about four years Ireland was happily relieved from many commer-"cial restraints, which should have been removed long before, and gained several "other points which she thought essential to her welfare. The volunteers, preserving "a degree of reserve and decency, kept at a certain distance, but were never en-"tirely out of sight. They had been serviceable in supporting the civil magistrate; "fewer castles, houses, or lands, were kept by forcible possession; sheriffs were "enabled to do their duty; fewer rapes and other enormities were committed "than usual: and here, if the volunteers had stopped, and we had seen no more "of them after the establishment of peace, their page in history would have been "fair and respectable."

* See Considerations on the Expediency and Necessity of the present Associations. Remembrancer, vol. viii. p. 185.

† Fifty thousand guineas.

larly the Protestant charter schools and linen manufacture.

1779. Debate on the address.

In anticipation of the opening of Parliament, three opposition members, Mr. Burgh, Mr. Daly, and Mr. Grattan, met at Bray, a small town near Dublin, and concerted an amendment, or rather a counter address, to which, in its preparation, a great support was expected to be given. Mr. Grattan, who took the lead in this transaction, declared the speech promised much, but offered nothing; it owned the distress of the country, but presented no relief: and he moved the amendment, representing the calamities of the nation, and beseeching his Majesty for a free export and import, which was the birth-right of every Irishman. In the course of the debate, some members disclaimed the authority of the Lords and Commons of Great Britain, and their right to interfere in the legislation of Ireland, which was an independent nation, subject only to the King, and to its own Lords and Commons. Mr. Grattan's amendment was altered and modified into a declaration, that, in the present posture of affairs, temporizing expedients would not avail; the nation could only be saved from destruction by the allowance of a free and unlimited trade to all her ports, and carried with only one dissentient voice. The addresses were carried up with great parade, and attended with a thunder of popular acclamation; the Duke of Leinster in person escorted the Speaker from the House of Parliament to the castle, the streets being lined on both sides with volunteers, armed, and in uniform.

October and November. Popular measures.

Inquiries were immediately instituted into the state of the pension list, secret service, national debt, expenditure of money voted for the defence of the kingdom, expenses attending encampments and the produce of the hearth tax; and a committee was appointed on the state of the nation.

15th Nov. Limited supply.

Apprehensive of some impediment, either from the supporters of government in Ireland, or from the privy-council of Great Britain, in the principal object of obtaining a free trade, the popular party proposed to keep government in dependence and subjection, by

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1779. Riot in Dublin.

passing a money bill to supply the Exchequer for six months only. As this measure met with violent opposition, the populace of Dublin, instigated perhaps by their superiors, assumed the privilege of directing the proceedings of the legislature. A mob of five or six thousand assembled before the House of Parliament, clamouring for a free trade and a short money bill: they stopped the Speaker in his coach, and tendering an oath to several of the members, compelled those who had not sufficient firmness for resistance to bind themselves by that solemn obligation to support the favoured measures. Several were insulted and maltreated; but the great storm of popular fury fell on Mr. Scott, the Attorney-General: he was called by name in each of the courts of law and equity, for the avowed purpose of being put to death; his house was broke open and reduced to a ruin; and while his dwelling was filled with the yells and execrations of the furious rabble, anonymous letters assured him that he should not survive the hour of his vote against the short money bill. The civil arm was insufficient to restrain the tumult; the military were superseded by the volunteers, and these did not interfere further than by a deputation from the lawyers' corps, unarmed, persuading the mob, when satiated with their own excesses, to disperse. The Attorney-General complained to the House of Commons, but had the mortification to hear the sentiments of the populace espoused, and their conduct partially defended; the debate was hardly less tumultuous than the occasion of it; the House at length agreed to address the Lord-Lieutenant to issue a proclamation for apprehending the rioters. The short money bill passed, and, mortifying as such a proceeding must have been, received the sanction of the privy-council*.

16th Nov.

* On these transactions, see Memoirs of Grattan, vol. i. c. 17; Plowden. vol. i. p. 487; Barrington, vol. i. c. 4; and for judicious observations and important statements on the situation of Ireland in general, Letters to the Earl of Carlisle, from William Eden, Esq., p. 137 to 174, and Appendixes, 1 to 5.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-SEVENTH.

1779—1780.

Meeting of Parliament.—King's Speech.—Violent debates on addresses.—Relief afforded to Ireland.—Efforts on the subject of economy.—Motion by the Duke of Richmond.—Burke gives notice of bringing in a bill for economical reform.—Meeting of the freeholders of Yorkshire.—Corresponding committees appointed.—The example of Yorkshire generally followed.—London committee formed.—Burke introduces his plan of reform.—His celebrated speech.—Resolution for abolishing the Board of Trade.—Commission of accounts appointed—Bills for excluding contractors—and suspending the votes of revenue officers, rejected.—Account of places—and of pensions payable at the Exchequer, laid before the House.—Duels between members of Parliament.—Debates on the raising of volunteer regiments.—Altercation between Lord North and Sir Fletcher Norton.—Numerous county and city petitions.—Intemperate language on introducing them.—Discussion of the petitions.—Resolutions passed on the influence of the crown.—The expenditure of the civil list—and the relief of the people.—The resolutions reported.—Motion for account of monies paid to members of Parliament.—Vote for rendering certain officers incapable of sitting.—Illness of the Speaker.—Adjournment.—Motion against dissolving Parliament—rejected.—Indignation of Fox.—Further proceedings on the petitions.—Report of the committee refused.—General observations.

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1779. 25th Nov.

Such were the general circumstances of disaffection and alarm at the commencement of a session of Parliament, which in its progress was unusually turbulent, distinguished for acrimonious violence in debate,

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1779. Meeting of Parliament.

formidable attacks on the stability of government, and delusive speculations on economy and reformation; attended with unusual associations among the people, and a dreadful explosion of popular violence, which, in the very seat of government, braved its authority, and left no measure for preserving the constitution and defending life and property, but that, ever abhorrent to the principles of freemen, the military arm.

King's speech.

The King, in his speech, said, the Parliament was called on by every principle of duty, and every consideration of interest, to exert united efforts in support and defence of the country, attacked by an unjust and unprovoked war, and contending with one of the most dangerous confederacies ever formed. Aided by the protection of Providence, the zeal of the nation, and the justice of his cause, he was firmly resolved vigorously to prosecute the war, for the purpose of compelling the enemy to equitable terms of peace.

He had not been inattentive to the addresses of last session respecting Ireland, but had ordered papers to be laid before Parliament, and recommended to their consideration what further benefits might be extended to that kingdom, by regulations most effectually promoting the common strength, wealth, and interests of all his dominions.

Amendment to the address moved in the Lords.

In opposing the address, the Marquis of Rockingham censured the facility with which Lord Grantham and Lord Stormont had suffered themselves to be deceived by the craft of Spain and France, and the confidence with which ministers had assured Parliament that treaties inimical to the interests of Great Britain were not in existence or even in embryo. The address recognized the blessings of his Majesty's government; but that recognition was unfounded in truth and an insult to the House. No bias, no prejudice, no temptation, could so far confound truth and reason with their opposites, as to convert the very cause of our misfortunes into blessings. There was a time, indeed, at which he could have congratulated the King on the blessings enjoyed under his government. He remembered when his Majesty ascended the throne

of his ancestors with glory and lustre; but for the last seventeen years those blessings had gradually decreased, and the nation was reduced to an unexampled state of degradation. This change he attributed to a baneful and pernicious system of unconstitutional controul and advice. As the system was wrong in its first concoction, so its effects were extended to every department. The greatest officers were driven from the service and proscribed, in a period of the most imminent danger; and Lord Sandwich was not ashamed to retain his office, although he knew that his continuance precluded naval commanders of the most exalted character and abilities from serving their country.

From the unpopularity of the first lord of the admiralty, the Marquis turned to its cause, his personal incapacity, which he instanced in the negligent defence of the northern shores of the kingdom: the town of Hull was kept in continual alarm by apprehensions of Paul Jones; Captain Pierson was relied on as sufficient in force for their protection; but to the utter disappointment of the inhabitants, he was unable, with the most resolute valour, to prevent his own capture.

The discontents in Ireland were ascribed to the bad faith of ministers, who promised to produce measures of relief before the rising of Parliament; but, although the session continued seven weeks, paid no further attention to the subject; the people were consequently left in suspense, the associators were permitted to become important, and concessions, which would then have been received as favours, were now demanded as rights not to be resigned, modified, or qualified. The Marquis then adverted to the progress of hostilities in America, censuring with unrestrained severity the proclamation issued by the commissioners, as an accursed manifesto, the forerunner of a war of the most horrid and diabolical nature; a war not merely contrary to the Christian religion, to the acknowledged principles of morality and humanity, to the laws of war, and the modes of carrying on hostilities, observed even among Turkish and other sanguinary nations, but to the last degree bloody, malignant and diabolical. It would be

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a precedent and a justification to France and Spain in landing on the least defended parts of the British coast and committing ravages without hope of benefit. He accordingly moved an amendment, omitting the whole address except the title, and "beseeching his Majesty "to reflect on the extent of territory, the power, the "opulence, the reputation abroad, and the concord at "home, which distinguished the opening of his reign, "and marked it as the most happy and splendid period "in the history of the nation; and on the endangered, "impoverished, enfeebled, distracted, and even dis-"membered state of the whole, after all the grants of "successive parliaments, liberal to profusion, and "trusting to the very utmost extent of rational con-"fidence." Nothing could prevent the consummation of public ruin, he observed, but new councils and new counsellors; a real change, proceeding from a sincere conviction of past errors, and not a mere palliation, which must prove fruitless.

The debate engaged an extensive discussion on the state of the kingdom and all its dependencies, which was represented as most deplorable by the Dukes of Richmond and Grafton, Lord Shelburne, Lord Camden, Lord Effingham, Lord Townshend, and Lord Lyttelton, who again appeared in the ranks of opposition, and decried the American war, as a mad Quixotic sally. The cause of government was ably defended by the lords in administration to whose particular departments the specific complaints applied. Lord Stormont denied that the calamities which surrounded the nation ought to be ascribed to the confederacy in arms, the situation of Ireland, or the conduct of ministers; but they arose from internal division, and the violent and incautious language too often held in Parliament. Lord Mansfield declared, that from the distressed and perilous situation of the country, he was persuaded nothing but a full and comprehensive union of all parties and all men could effect its salvation: he was old enough to remember the realm in very embarrassed situations; he had seen violent party struggles; but no previous time presented an image of the present. How

far the temper of the nation and state of parties might admit of a coalition, he could not decide; but the event was devoutly to be wished. Such was the alarming state of affairs, that the country loudly claimed the assistance of every heart and hand; and though such a co-operation might prevent despair, yet the most confident and resolute of mankind must discern sufficient motives to stagger his confidence, and shake his resolution.

The amendment was negatived*.

In the House of Commons.

Lord John Cavendish moved the same amendment in the House of Commons. The debate was conducted with great asperity, and almost unparalleled intemperance of speech. The mover, adverting with a sneer to the mention of Divine Providence in the speech from the throne, said Providence was indeed the great ally to whom alone the kingdom owed its preservation; an inferior fleet, a defenceless coast, an exhausted treasury, presented an easy prey to the enemy; ministers, supine, negligent, and divided, had brought the realm to the verge of destruction; but Providence interposed, and the danger blew over. Such were the glaring absurdities, criminal omissions, and scandalous inconsistencies of administration, that, unless they were banished from the royal presence, and this system totally overturned, the nation must inevitably fall under the power of its enemies.

The King, it was observed, had not in his speech once mentioned America: the accursed war with that country had cost many millions of money, many thousands of lives, yet it was not noticed by the King, unless it was included in the general term, "all my dominions;" but, by the omission of a more particular mention, it might be supposed the King saw the necessity of renouncing all claim to sovereignty over the colonies.

The internal defence of the kingdom, and the protection of its external possessions, the guaranty of

* 82 to 41.

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trade, and the honour of the national flag, were shamefully and wickedly neglected. Enormous sums had been voted for the army, and expended without an appearance of economy; instead of detaching parts for occasional services, the unwieldy machine was kept idle and inactive at home. The modelling of the military body was scandalous and unjust: the experienced veteran was superseded by the raw subaltern, who had the advantage, not of superior merit, but superior patronage; and thus the quick sense of honour, irritated at undeserved indignity, was exhausted in complaints and murmurings. The terrified merchant trusted with reluctance his property on the sea, while the Channel was covered with the fleets of France and Spain, and the intercourse with the ocean in a great measure intercepted. These considerations depressed the spirits of all who were engaged in commerce, and affected the manufactures. The lower class of people were unemployed, and the value of land suffered an alarming and rapid decrease. In the West Indies, Dominica captured, St. Vincent's wrested from us, and Grenada once more under the obedience of France. Misfortune and dejection were impressed on the countenance of every gentleman who had property in those islands; their fortunes had been crushed, if not annihilated, by the shock. The coast of Scotland was naked and defenceless; Paul Jones might have destroyed Glasgow, Leith, Greenock, and Edinburgh: the people of Dumfriesshire had petitioned for arms, but sustained a mortifying refusal. Plymouth, the second naval arsenal in the kingdom, had been left undefended. Providence alone had protected it; for such was the superiority of the combined fleets, that the British navy skulked in the Channel, hiding among the rocks for safety, and stealing out without daring to fire signal guns; while the artillery of the enemy thundered in the ears of the people, and kept Plymouth in continual alarm. The garrison was so weak, and so little capable of resistance, that had the enemy landed, they must have destroyed the town:

"We would have met them," said Mr. Minchin, "with the spirit of Englishmen; but sure I am that "to a man we must have perished."

In the course of debate, an assertion was attributed to the friends of administration, that the King was his own minister, his own admiral in chief, his own general, his own secretary, his own president of the council, and his own financier. Although Lord North denied the assertion, Mr. Fox animadverted on it as a doctrine dangerous to the constitution, tending to remove responsibility from those who ought to bear it, to him who can do no wrong, and cannot be called to account. But although, in general, the evils of a reign might be attributed to wicked ministers, still when those amounted to a certain height, the ministers were forgot, and the prince alone encountered the indignation of the people. Charles I and James II paid for the crimes of their ministers, the one with his life, the other with his crown: their fate presented a salutary admonition for succeeding sovereigns, to restrain, and not blindly follow, the dictates of their servants. It was not a secret, nor should it be a moment absent from the King's recollection, that he owed his crown to the delinquency of the Stuart family. The pretensions of that unfortunate and detested race could occasion no alarm; but were one of them remaining, what scope for upbraiding and remonstrance could he not find in the present reign. "You have "banished my ancestors," he might exclaim, "from "the throne, and barred the sceptre against all his "progeny for the misconduct of his ministers, yet your "present ministers are ten times more wicked and "ignorant; and whilst you give your sovereign the "title of best of princes, his ministers have rendered "his reign beyond comparison the most infamous that "ever disgraced the nation."

"No period in the history of the country," he observed, "furnished a parallel to the present, except "the reign of Henry VI. His family, like that of the "King, did not claim the crown by hereditary descent; "both owed it to revolutions; both were amiable and

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"pious princes. Henry was the son of the most re-
"nowned monarch that ever sat on the throne; George
"was grandson of a hero: Henry lost all his father's
"conquests, and all his hereditary provinces in France;
"George had already seen the conquests of his grand-
"father wrested from him in the West Indies, and his
"hereditary provinces of America erected into an em-
"pire that disclaimed his connexion. Brighter pros-
"pects could not be imagined than those which dis-
"tinguished the commencement of his Majesty's reign:
"possessed of immense dominions, and the warmest
"affections of his people, his accession was highly
"flattering to himself and his subjects. How sadly
"was the scene reversed! his empire dismembered,
"his councils distracted, and his subjects abating their
"fondness for his person. The patience of the people
"was not unlimited: they would at last do themselves
"justice by insurrections; and although the attendant
"calamities could not be justified, or compensated
"by any resulting good, yet they were inevitable.
"Treachery, and not ignorance, must have prevailed
"in the national councils, to reduce the nation to so
"miserable a condition; the minister might flatter
"himself in the protection of a majority, or security of
"the law; but when the nation was reduced to such a
"state of wretchedness and distraction that the laws
"could afford the people no relief, they would afford
"the ministers, who had caused the evil, but little
"protection. What the law of the land could not,
"the law of nature would accomplish; the people
"would inevitably take up arms, and the first charac-
"ters in the kingdom would be seen in the ranks!"

Lord George Gordon, whose intemperate fanaticism and audacious virulence had often disgraced the House, insisted that the King's speech abounded in impropriety, and was deficient in common sense: the ministry were no less odious in Ireland than in England; and the people of Scotland were almost equally prepared to rise in opposition. Adverting to the refusal to permit the arming of the inhabitants of Dumfriesshire, he read a letter to the Duke of Queens-

bury from the Secretary-at-war; then, suddenly apostrophizing that minister, "and you, Charles Jenkinson," he exclaimed, "how durst you write such a "letter! Robert Bruce would not have dared to write "such a one: and yet the Secretary of an elector of "Hanover has had the presumption to do it; the "royal family of Stuart were banished for not attending to the voice of their people; and yet theelector "of Hanover is not afraid to disregard it. Sir Hugh "Smithson, Earl Percy (Duke of Northumberland), "armed cap-a-pie, marches, at the head of all the "cheesemongers and grocers, from Temple-bar to "Brentford, and the great Earl Douglas of Scotland "is not to be entrusted with arms. The Scotch are "irritated at this partiality; and in point of religion "they are exasperated, as they are convinced the "King is a Papist."

This torrent of ribaldry was arrested by the interposition of the Speaker; but unlimited acrimony prevailed during the whole debate. The adherents of administration were loaded with personal abuse, and national reflections were not spared. "Three northern "oracles of the long robe, recommended no doubt to "favour by the singular loyalty of their houses, had "introduced," Mr. Temple Luttrel said, "a baleful "policy into the government, 'Taxation or starva-"'tion' was the laconic and energetic expression of the "Lord-Advocate of Scotland: 'Let loose the savage "'Indians, more fierce than the blood-hounds of "'Columbus, and employ the negro servants to "'butcher their masters,' exclaims the Attorney-General: 'The Rubicon, the Rubicon,' is the word of "the Chief-Justice of the King's Bench, the last of "this worthy, amiable triumvirate. 'We must go for-"'ward through proscription, devastation, and car-"'nage.' And this our modern hero of the Rubicon, "who must soon render an awful account before a "Judge far mightier than himself, instead of leaving "commentaries on the laws and constitution of England, will bequeath commentaries on the American "campaigns, from which future leaders, under venge-

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" ful commissions, may learn their best lessons of " barbarity, and improve in every art of increasing " human wretchedness. And yet the day is not far " distant when, in the words of their countryman, " Macbeth, they shall call out in a woeful concert, " ' we but teach bloody instructions, which, being " ' taught, return to plague the inventors.' "

Perhaps this unusual virulence of invective enabled ministers to make their defence more readily than a temperate opposition, joined to the circumstances of the times, would have allowed them to expect. The extreme irritability and indecent violence of the minority justified the observation of Mr. Adam, that these days exhibited the political phenomenon of an unsuccessful ministry and an unpopular opposition.

All the ministers concurred in denying that they had endeavoured to evade responsibility, by implicating the personal character of his Majesty, in their measures; such an attempt would not have been less absurd than unconstitutional, since the law annexed to their situations a responsibility, which no artifice could compromise or avoid. The principal defence of administration rested on Lord North, who reduced the whole matter of complaint against the cabinet to the single fact that the house of Bourbon possessed a greater naval force than Great Britain. That they had been permitted to collect this force unmolested and undisturbed, could not be imputed as a crime; but a review of the campaign would shew that disgrace, not honour, had accrued to them from its progress. They had equipped a formidable armament, threatened, performed nothing, and retired: their professed object was invasion; they had not dared to make the attempt, and were, therefore, foiled; their armaments had paraded to no purpose, and their millions were squandered in vain; he almost wished they had landed, convinced that a British militia would have added defeat to their present disgrace. It was not candid in opposition to attribute the protection of our trade entirely to Providence; it could not escape their penetration, that for an Admiral, with thirty-six or

forty sail of the line, to hold in check a fleet consisting of sixty-six sail, required more than common abilities; nor could they refuse to acknowledge, that, by keeping together such an immense armament, which might otherwise have been separated and employed on specific operations, the British Admiral had rendered an important service to trade, and merited admiration and applause. It was asked why the junction of the two hostile fleets had not been prevented? Such had been the intention of ministers; but the French, in order to anticipate it, had put to sea in so bad a state of preparation, that many of their ships were afterward obliged to return into port. The British fleet, on which the existence of the nation depended, could not avoid delay by sailing in an imperfect condition; but, had Sir Charles Hardy known in the summer the internal state of the combined fleet, he would have desired and sought an engagement, which, from the health, spirit, activity, and superior naval skill of the British squadron, could only have terminated gloriously for the country. Plymouth had been reinforced at the moment of danger, and was now in a condition to defy the united efforts of the house of Bourbon; the navy was daily augmenting, and, although he was not disposed to render disappointment dreadful by sanguine predictions, he had the firmest hope of a brilliant campaign in the spring.

The Secretary-at-war vindicated, or palliated, several imputed acts of misconduct in the management of the army; and the Attorney-General and Mr. Dundas reinforced Lord North's general arguments with many judicious and apposite observations. The amendment was negatived*.

Affairs of Ireland discussed.

In these debates frequent allusions were made to the state of Ireland, and the miseries and expectations of the people: the members of administration in both Houses gave positive assurances that plans and arrangements were in contemplation; which would give entire satisfaction to that branch of the empire. Before

* 233 to 134.

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1779. 1st Dec. Lord Shelburne's motion.

these intentions could be put in execution, Lord Shelburne, having obtained a summons of the House, recapitulated the proceedings of the last session, blamed the delay of ministers in affording relief, and attributed to that circumstance the prevalent disaffection and formidable front of resistance in Ireland. The government had been abdicated, and the people were justified, by the principles of the constitution and the laws of self-preservation, in resuming its powers. He would not, however, gather their sentiments from the proceedings of county and town meetings, the language of associations, and the general spirit, but confine himself to an authentic state paper; the address of both houses of Parliament, which declared that "nothing "less than a free trade would rescue the kingdom from "ruin." This was the united voice of the nation, conveyed to the throne through the proper constitutional organs; in it parties of all classes and descriptions concurred; church of England men, Roman Catholics, Dissenters, and sectaries of every sort; whigs and tories, placemen, pensioners, and country gentlemen; Englishmen by birth; in short, every man in and out of Parliament: such was the present temper of Ireland. When, during the last session, their affairs were submitted to Parliament, moderate concession, and the hope of obtaining more in future, would have satisfied them; but now, from the misconduct, incapacity, and, above all, the shameful inattention of ministers, Great Britain was driven to the melancholy terms of submitting to the dictates of Ireland, or of losing Ireland as well as America. He attributed much of this misconduct to Lord North, who eternally slept when he should be awake, was scarcely ever attentive, but when alacrity led to error, and who never moved with more than his accustomed pace, however pressing the exigency or imminent the peril; similar, in this, to the French general, who, although he received intelligence that forty thousand men were in danger of being surrounded, could not be prevailed on to put his horse into a trot.

His lordship attributed the complaints and griev-

ances of Ireland chiefly to the power of the crown in disbursing the hereditary revenue, the mischievous disposal of church preferment, and the rejection of bills calculated for relief, by the interference of the minister in the House of Commons. Thus, instead of ten or twelve thousand associators, full four times the number were well armed and accoutred, and daily improving in discipline. The honour and dignity of the crown were disgraced. The sword was dropped, and the people had taken it up, to defend themselves against a foreign enemy, and to obtain, by arms, justice; which, as in the case of America, had been denied to their humble applications, and the repeated narrratives of their calamities and distress. He concluded by moving a vote of censure on ministers, for neglecting to take effectual measures for the relief of Ireland, in consequence of the address of the 11th of May, and suffering the discontents to arise to a height which endangered the political connexion of the two countries.

Lord Hillsborough, defending the conduct of administration, proved that no delay could be fairly imputed; measures for relief of Ireland could not be adopted by government, but must flow from the legislature, and could not be entered on without proper information. A letter had been written in May to the lord lieutenant, and an answer received only in July, replete with important information; since which time, ministers had been indefatigably employed in making arrangements, and the result would be speedily communicated.

Much extraneous matter was introduced into the debate, as well by Lord Shelburne, as those who followed him, tending to convey censure both on particular members of the cabinet, and on the collective body of administration. Lord Abingdon recited a threat of Lord Lyttelton, who died since the beginning of the session*; importing that he would reveal matters respecting the ministry, which all their arts of impo-

* 27th November, 1779.

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sition and hitherto unshaken effrontery could not countervail. The Marquis of Rockingham related an anecdote respecting the purchase of the clerkship of the pells from Mr. Fox to bestow it on Mr. Jenkinson, which loaded the Irish establishment with an addition of three thousand pounds a-year. Lord Gower opposed the motion, though convinced that the censure was well founded; "he had presided," he said, "for some "years at the council-table, and had seen such things "pass of late, that no man of honour or conscience "could sit there any longer." The times required explicit declarations; he had supported the American war on principle, and was still confident that the resources of the country were sufficient to resist the dangerous confederacy by which it was opposed; but, to profit by those resources, energy and effect must be restored to government. Lord Shelburne's motion was negatived*.

1st Dec. Motion in the House of Commons.

On the same day in which this question was discussed in the Upper House, Lord North communicated to the Commons additional papers on the subject of Ireland, promising the remainder with all convenient expedition, and that in eight days he would introduce a plan which would convince the sister-kingdom of the genuine good-will toward her which governed his Majesty's councils. This intimation did not prevent the Earl of Upper Ossory from introducing to the House a motion of censure, similar to that of Lord Shelburne, which he enforced by nearly the same arguments.

6th Dec.

The vote was opposed on the general principle that no neglect had been proved, and that the charge was not specifically pointed. The grievances of Ireland did not originate with present ministers; nor was any act of theirs included in the complaint, which embraced a series of acts of Parliament, from the twelfth of Charles II to the beginning of the present reign, but none since his Majesty's accession. The Irish desired a free trade. Had the ministry restrained their trade?

* 82 to 37.

on the contrary, they had enlarged it: they had given bounties on the Newfoundland fishery, encouraged the growth of hemp and tobacco, permitted the exportation of woollen for clothing the troops of that country, and of several articles to the West Indies and the coast of Africa: they had conferred more benefits on the Irish nation in the compass of a few years than all the other administrations since the revolution. Earl Nugent, though he loved his native country, disapproved the motion. He had proposed (and he considered the proposition wise and liberal) to relieve Ireland from the restrictions on commerce His views were to produce equal benefits to both countries (for God forbid he should advance any local interest to the general prejudice of the British empire), and grant to Ireland every indulgence which could promise substantial benefit without injury to Great Britain. Many branches of manufacture and commerce were monopolized, to the great detriment and impoverishment of Ireland, without material benefit to England.

In discussing the mere merits of the motion, few opportunities occurred of blaming or distressing administration; but a most perverse and malignant mode was adopted of drawing parallels between Ireland and America; stating the conduct of the one to be no less rebellious than that of the other, and braving the minister to exercise similar vengeance. "Ireland," it was said, "spurned at the British claim of dominion; "considering herself free and independent, and was "determined to maintain the principle. A mob had "risen in Dublin, and non-importation agreements "had taken place; why not, like ill-fated Boston, shut "up the port of Dublin, burn Cork, reduce Water-"ford to ashes? Why not prohibit all popular meet-"ings in that kingdom, and destroy all popular elec-"tions? Why not alter the usual mode of striking "juries, as was done by the Massachuset's charter act? "Why not bring the Dublin rioters over to this coun-"try to be tried by an English jury? Why not shut "up their ports, and prevent them from trading with "each other? And lastly, why not declare them out

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" of the King's peace? In short, why not proscribe " the principal leaders who held commissions, not under " the crown, but by the election of the very corps which " they commanded, and declare the whole kingdom in " rebellion? The answer was plain and direct; ministers " dare not: sad and dear-bought experience had taught " them the folly as well as impracticability of such mea- " sures; the danger of the present awful moment made " insolence and arrogance give way to fear and humi- " liation!" The motion was rejected*.

13th Dec. Relief afforded to Ireland.

In pursuance of his promise, Lord North introduced three propositions for the relief of Ireland, allowing a free export of wool, woollens, and wool flocks; of glass and all kinds of glass manufactures; and a free trade with the British plantations on certain conditions, the basis of which was an equality of taxes and customs. The minister's speech was most able, intelligent, and satisfactory; the first two bills passed without delay; the third was arrested in its progress till the sentiments of the Irish could be ascertained. But although great pains were taken to inflame the pride and increase the pretensions of that nation, by representing the concessions as matter of right, not of favour, as a tribute to their military spirit, not as a spontaneous effusion of affection, the Parliament was too wise to depreciate present gain by remote and useless speculation, both Houses received the acts with great satisfaction, with expressions of loyalty to the King and esteem for the British legislature; and the people declared the utmost cordiality and friendship toward England†. Lord North, with only a few impediments from Lord George Gordon, and other subalterns of opposition, perfected his original plan, adding to the measures already enumerated, a repeal of the prohibitions on exporting English gold coin and importing foreign hops, and enabling the Irish to become members of the Turkey company, and trade to the Levant.

2nd Feb. 1780.

While the minister was thus endeavouring to re-

* 173 to 100.

† See Lord Irnham's speech in the House of Commons, the 24th January, 1780.

1779. Efforts on the subject of economy.

store tranquillity to the sister kingdom, the spirit of disaffection was studiously excited in England, by appeals on a subject which never fails to interest the feelings of a commercial nation, the expenses of government, and the necessity of economy. A jealous vigilance over the national purse is one of the most sacred duties of a member of Parliament; and every exertion apparently instigated by that motive gains credit and regard from the most sedate and prudent part of society. It is easy to combine with the performance of this duty a harsh and coarse appeal to the prejudices of the vulgar and inconsiderate, by declaiming against the splendour of royalty, the expensiveness of sinecure and other places, and the luxury of dependents on the court, compared with the penury of the people at large. These unworthy efforts rarely fail of their effect, especially in a costly and unsuccessful war. To these topics the opposition now had recourse, and blended with this dangerous and fallacious mode of discussion, the inference, still more dangerous and fallacious, that all these expenses were not only detrimental to the pecuniary interest of the people, but that their liberties were bought and sold with their own plunder, as all the supplies extorted from them were employed to extend the undue influence of the Crown. This was the political text of the whole session, and was dilated on in such a manner as to occasion more danger to the safety of government than a successful rebellion and a hostile foreign confederacy had been able to effect.

In conformity with this principle, the estimates and supplies were censured with acrimony; and no argument left unessayed which could beget uneasiness in the public mind, and convert a wholesome attention to pecuniary interest into a feverish solicitude about economy.

7th Dec. Motion by the Duke of Richmond.

As a first attempt, the Duke of Richmond moved for an address, intreating the King to reflect on the manifold distresses of the country; that profusion was not vigour, and that it became indispensably necessary to adopt that true economy which, by reforming all

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useless expenses, creates confidence in government; submitting to his consideration that a considerable reduction of the civil list would be an example worthy his affection for his people, and extend through every department of the state; and assuring him that any member of the House would cheerfully submit to any required diminution in the emoluments of office.

In support of this motion, the Duke recapitulated our large and expensive war establishment, and the frightful increase of the national debt. In France, M. Necker had borrowed nearly four millions sterling in two years without imposing any taxes, but providing for the interest by savings; thus our inveterate enemy was adopting the wise system of economy, while we were daily plunging deeper into boundless extravagance. The whole landed property of Great Britain was mortgaged for an annual payment of eight millions, and the land and sea force to be maintained for the current year was already announced at two hundred and seventy-three thousand men. He did not wish to abridge the dignity and splendour of the Crown; but the King ought to set the example of retrenchment, which he had no doubt the lords would cheerfully follow. In an explanatory speech, he said, "I do not intend to deduct from the stipends settled "on persons who have wasted fortunes in the service "of the country; the Pelhams, the Walpoles, and the "Pitts, are names remembered with sufficient grati- "tude to make their pensions sacred."

In the debate, other popular topics were introduced; as, the influence of the Crown, and the necessity of a radical reform. The objections to the motion were, that none of the facts it recited were authenticated; a *considerable* reduction conveyed no specific meaning, nor could any minister presume to advise the King under such a vote. Even should the address be presented, his Majesty was not bound to pay regard to it; the civil list was established by act of parliament, and could not be retrenched by the decision of one House; nor could any thing but an act of parliament, founded on information, which it would be laborious and diffi-

cult to obtain, effect a reduction in every species of official emolument. The civil list would not, in fact, bear any diminution, and it would be a baseness in Parliament, after so recently voting an augmentation, to declare their inability to make good their own grant. The motion was considered as intended only to effect the removal of administration, and an explicit avowal of that purpose would have been more candid and honourable. It was rejected*.

15th Dec. Burke gives notice of his intention to bring in bills for economical reform.

The subject of economical reform was introduced into the lower House by Mr. Burke, who gave notice of his intention to propose, after the recess, some important regulations. Like the Duke of Richmond, he vaunted the beneficial retrenchments of Necker, to which he attributed the creation of a marine from the rubbish, wrecks, and fragments of the late war. The British minister, on the contrary, never gave a hint, never directed a glance toward the important subject of economy, though the Dutch practice and the Roman principle might have taught him that old and true lesson, *magnum vectigal est parsimonia*†; but if ministers were thus negligent, it was the duty of the House to comply with the general wish of the people. He anticipated a cold reception of his propositions, as they would tend to weaken the influence of the Court; men out of office could only offer, the people must achieve the rest; if they were not true to themselves, no other power could save them. All the grievances of the nation arose from the fatal and overgrown influence of the Crown; and that influence itself from the enormous prodigality of the Commons. Formerly the operation of influence was confined to the superior orders of the state; it had of late insinuated itself into every creek and cranny in the kingdom. There was scarcely a family, he said, so hidden and lost in the obscurest

* 77 to 37.

† In quoting this apophthegm, Mr. Burke inadvertently used a false quantity, pronouncing the word vectīgal, vectĭgal. The classical ear of Fox immediately caught the error, and in a whisper he corrected his colleague. Burke, with great presence of mind, turned the incident to advantage: "My honourable friend "informs me," he said, "that I have mistaken the quantity of a principal word "in my quotation: I am glad, however, to repeat the inestimable adage," and with increased energy he thundered forth, "magnum vect-I-gal est parsimonia."

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recesses of the community, which did not feel that it had something to keep or to get, to hope or to fear, from the favour or displeasure of the Crown. Some degree of influence was necessary for government; but for the sake of government, for the sake of restoring that reverence which was its foundation, the exorbitancy of influence ought to be restrained. Every one must be sensible of the increase of influence, and the degradation of authority. The reason was evident: government should have force adequate to its functions, but no more; if it had enough to support itself in abusing or neglecting them, they must ever be abused or neglected: men would rely on power for a justification of their want of order, vigilance, foresight, and all the virtues, all the qualifications of statesmen. The minister might exist, but the government was gone.

"It is thus," he exclaimed, "that you see the "same men, in the same power, sitting undisturbed "before you, though thirteen colonies are lost. Thus "the marine of France and Spain has quietly grown "and prospered under their eye, and been fostered by "their neglect. Thus all hope of alliance in Europe "is abandoned. Thus three of our West India islands "have been torn from us in a summer. Thus, Jamaica, "the most important of all, has been neglected, and "all inquiry into that neglect stifled. Thus, Ireland "has been brought into a state of distraction, that no "one dares even to discuss; the bill relating to it, "though making great and perplexing changes, is "such, that no one knows what to say, or what not to "say, respecting it. Our parliamentary capacity is "extinguished by the difficulty of our situation. The "bill has been mumbled over with rapidity; and it "passes in the silence of death. Had government "any degree of strength, could this have happened? "Could the most ancient prerogative of the crown, "with relation to the most essential object, the militia, "have been annihilated with so much scorn as it has "been, even at our doors? Could his Majesty have "been degraded from the confidence of his people of

" Ireland in a manner so signal, and so disgraceful, " that they who have trusted his predecessors in many " particulars for ever, and in all for two years, should " have contracted their confidence in him to a poor " stinted tenure of six months? Could the govern- " ment of this country have been thus cast to the " ground, and thus dashed to pieces in its fall, if the " influence of a court was its natural and proper poise; " if corruption was its soundness; and self-interest " had the virtue to keep it erect and firm upon its " base?"

The disease of government, he observed, was a repletion: the over feeding of the stomach had destroyed the vigour of the limbs. He had long ascertained the nature of the disorder, and the specific remedy: but had restrained his thoughts, partly from want of personal importance, partly from the effects of his own disposition; he was not naturally an economist, and was cautious of experiment, even to timidity. But the temper of the times was favourable to reformation; there was a dawn of hope; and although the powers of a ministry were best calculated to give effect to such a measure, the present auspicious moment was not to be neglected. He would not yet disclose all the particulars of his plan, he would reserve the means of executing it, and state only the end, objects, and limits.

He intended a regulation, substantial as far as it extended, which would give to the public service two hundred thousand pounds a year, and annihilate a portion of influence equal to the places of fifty members of Parliament. Such a reform was more to be relied on for removing the means of corruption than any devices to prevent its operation; an abrogation of the sources of influence would render disqualifications unnecessary; but while the sources remained, nothing could prevent their operation on Parliament. No other radical attempt at reformation need, however, be impeded: the present plan could not make a careless minister an economist; but it would be a check on the worst, and a benefit to the best.

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He then detailed the limits of his scheme: the first was founded on the rules of justice; nothing should be invaded which was held by a private individual under a legal tenure. The next limit was in the rules of equity and mercy: where offices might be suppressed which formed the whole maintenance of innocent people, it was hard, and hardship was a kind of injustice, that they who had been decoyed into particular situations by the prodigality of Parliament, should be sacrificed to its repentance. The removals therefore embraced in his intended plan, would fall almost entirely on those who held offices from which they might be removed to accommodate ministerial arrangements, and surely the accommodation of the public was a cause of removal full as important as the convenience of any administration, or the displeasure of any minister. The third limit would be found in the service of the state: no employment, really and substantially useful to the public, should be abolished or abridged of its lawful and accustomed emoluments. The fourth limit would be, to leave a fund sufficiently solid for the reward of service or merit; and the fifth, to reserve to the crown an ample and liberal provision for personal satisfaction, and for as much of magnificence as suited the burthened state of the country; perhaps, some might think what he should propose to leave, more than was decent.

However presumptuous his attempt might appear, it was made with humility and integrity: he trusted it would give confidence to the people and strength to government; that it would make war vigorous, and peace really refreshing and recruiting.

Several members of opposition (and no others spoke) bestowed high encomiums on the plan of Mr. Burke. He had mentioned, with some expressions of shame, that a scheme of economical reform had been first mentioned in the Upper House and not in the Commons, whose peculiar office was the guardianship of the national treasure. Mr. Fox declared he was just come from the House of Lords, where the first men of abilities and public estimation in the kingdom

were libelling the Commons. Every instance they gave (and many strong ones were given) of uncorrected abuse with regard to public money, was a libel on the House of Commons. Every argument they used for the reduction of prodigal expense (and their arguments were various and unanswerable) was a libel on the House of Commons. Every one of their statements on the luxuriant growth of corrupt influence (and it never was half so flourishing) was a libel on the House of Commons. The same principle which promoted private friendship, he observed, created the affection of the people to their sovereign; but that must cease when his interests became totally dissociated from theirs. Could any thing be more unseemly, than to find, that when landed estates were sunk one fifth in value, rents unpaid, manufactures languishing, and trade expiring; burthen upon burthen piled on the fainting people; when men of all ranks were obliged to retrench the most innocent luxuries; and even such as were rather grown by habit into a kind of decent convenience, and draw themselves up into the limits of an austere and pinching economy; that just the beginning of that time should be chosen, that a period of such general distress should be snatched at, as the lucky moment of complimenting the Crown with an addition of no less than a hundred thousand pounds a year; that the King should rise in splendour on the very ruins of the country and amidst its desolation, should flourish with increased opulence amidst the cries of his afflicted subjects; it was something monstrous, something unnatural: an outrage to the sense, an insult on the sufferings of the nation.

30th Dec. Meeting and petition of the freeholders of Yorkshire.

During the Christmas recess, a public meeting of the freeholders of Yorkshire voted a petition to the House of Commons, representing the circumstances of the war, the accumulation of taxes, and the rapid decline of trade, manufactures, and rents; although rigid frugality was become indispensably necessary, many individuals enjoyed sinecure places, or efficient offices with exorbitant emoluments, and pensions unmerited by public services, whence the Crown had ac-

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quired a great unconstitutional influence, portending destruction to the liberties of the country. The true and legitimate end of government was not the emolument of any individual, but the welfare of the community; and, as the national purse was peculiarly entrusted to the House of Commons, it would be injurious to the rights and property of the people, and derogatory from the honour and dignity of Parliament, to grant any additional sum beyond the existing taxes, until effectual measures were taken for inquiring into and correcting the gross abuses in the expenditure of public money, reducing all exorbitant emoluments, rescinding and abolishing all sinecure places and unmerited pensions, and appropriating the produce to the necessities of the state.

Corresponding committees appointed.

A permanent committee of sixty-one individuals was appointed to carry on the necessary correspondence for effectually promoting the object of the petition, and to prepare a plan of association on legal and constitutional grounds, and support a laudable reform, and other measures conducing to restore the freedom of Parliament.

The example of Yorkshire generally followed.

This example was followed by many other counties and cities throughout the kingdom; public meetings were convened by advertisement; violent harangues were made against the proceedings and persons of the administration; corresponding committees were appointed, and the transactions were only marked by some slight shades of variation in degrees of violence.

10th and 12th Feb. 1780. London committee formed.

The City of London, beside establishing a corresponding committee, ordered the publication of their resolves in all the newspapers. To those acquainted with the mode of managing such transactions, it is well known that the names of multitudes may be easily obtained to petitions, and that the overbearing proceedings usual at public meetings will prevent the attendance of almost all but those who assemble for the purpose of carrying particular measures by means of abusive declamation and clamour, or of giving the colour of general approbation to certain propositions and resolutions. In some counties, particularly Sussex

and Hertfordshire, protests were signed by a great majority of the most respectable of the nobility and landed interest, in direct contradiction to the resolutions of the county meetings. In many other places, counter-meetings were held, counter-petitions framed, and protests subscribed; but the system, combination, and popularity of the associators seemed to prevail, every endeavour having been used to turn into ridicule the exertions of their opponents*.

Burke introduces his plan of reform. 11th Feb. His celebrated speech.

The petitions were daily presented to the House of Commons, and increased the public expectations, which the eloquence and reputation of Mr. Burke had excited. His plan, he said, was calculated to effect a considerable reduction of improper expense, a conversion of unprofitable title into productive estate, and to repress that corrupt influence which was itself the perennial spring of all prodigality and disaster; but he advanced to it with a tremor which shook him to the inmost fibre of his frame; he anticipated all the odium attending the exercise of that necessary virtue, parsimony, and all the resentment of individuals whose emoluments, patronage, and objects of pursuit must be diminished. He was not inclined to depreciate the successes, or undervalue the resources of the country; the one might be as brilliant, the other as unfathomable as they were represented. In fact, our resources were just whatever the people possessed and would submit to pay. Taxing was an easy business. Any projector could contrive new impositions, any bungler add to the old; but resources were not augmented by waste, nor would frugality lessen riches.

He strongly pressed on the House the example of France, which, he said, reminded him of the observation of Pyrrhus, on reconnoitring the Roman camp: "these barbarians have nothing barbarous in their "discipline." In the proceedings of the French King there was nothing of the character and genius of

* See the details of these meetings, copies of the petitions, reports of the speeches and motions, in the Remembrancer, vol. ix. at the places referred to in the Index. Also Political Papers by the Reverend Christopher Wyvill, Chairman of the late Committee of Association of the County of York, vol. i. p. 1 to 296.

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arbitrary finance; none of the bold frauds of bankrupt power; none of the wild struggles and plunges of despotism in distress; no lopping off from the capital of debt; no suspension of interest; no robbery under the name of loan; no raising the value, no debasing the substance of the coin. Nothing of Louis the XIV, or Louis the XV. On the contrary, by the very hands of arbitrary power, and in the very midst of war and confusion, rose a regular methodical system of public credit; a fabric was laid on the natural and solid foundations of trust and confidence among men; and rising, by fair gradations, order over order, according to the just rules of symmetry and art. He expatiated on this topic at great length, exhorting the House not to let economy be the only French fashion which England refused to copy.

An eminent criterion for distinguishing a wise from a weak and improvident administration was this: "well to know the best time and manner of yielding "what it is impossible to keep." Some would argue against every desire of reformation on the principles of a criminal prosecution, and justify their adherence to a pernicious system, by alleging it was not of their contrivance, that it was an inheritance of absurdity derived from their ancestors, and by making out a long and unbroken pedigree of mismanagers who had gone before them; but there was a time when the hoary head of inveterate abuse would neither draw reverence nor obtain protection, when a minister, by impeding reform, would make the faults of his office become his own. Early reformations were amicable arrangements with a friend in power; late reformations, terms imposed on a conquered enemy; the former were made in cool blood, the latter under a state of inflammation. But as it was the interest of government that reform should be early, it was the interest of the people that it should be temperate, because it would then be permanent, and contain a principle of growth. In hot reformations, in what men, more zealous than considerate, called making clear work, the whole was generally so crude, so harsh,

so indigested; mixed with so much imprudence, and so much injustice; so contrary to the whole course of human nature, and human institutions, that the very people who were most eager, were the first to grow disgusted at what they had done. Then some part of the abdicated grievance was recalled from its exile, in order to become a corrective of the correction. Then the abuse assumed the credit and popularity of a reform. Thus the very idea of purity and disinterestedness in politics would fall into disrepute, and be considered as the vision of hot and inexperienced men; and thus disorders would become incurable, not by the virulence of their own quality, but by the unapt and violent nature of the remedies. We must no more make haste to be rich by parsimony than by intemperate acquisition.

He objected to a place tax, as a measure not calculated to produce, but prevent, reformation; a composition to stay enquiry; a fine paid by mismanagement for the renewal of its lease. Such a measure could never be proper till useless offices were abrogated, and those which remained classed according to their respective degrees of importance, so as to admit an equal rule of taxation, and the civil list revenue so managed that the minister should no longer have the power of repaying with a private, whatever was taken by a public hand.

Unwilling to proceed in an arbitrary manner, in any particular which tended to change the settled state of things, he had laid down general principles which could not be debauched or corrupted by interest or caprice, and by them he regulated his proceedings: These were,

First, The abolition of all jurisdictions contributing rather to expense, oppression, and corrupt influence, than to the administration of justice.

Second, The disposal of all public estates which were more subservient to the purposes of vexing, overawing, and influencing the tenants, and to the expenses of receipt and management, than of benefit to the revenue.

Third, That offices bringing more charge than pro-

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portional advantage to the state, or which might be engrafted on others, ought, in the first case, to be taken away; and, in the second, consolidated.

Fourth, The abolition of all offices tending to obstruct the operations or enfeeble the foresight of the general superintendent of finance.

Fifth, The establishment of an order in payments, which would prevent partiality, and regulate receipt not by the importunity of the claimant, but by the utility of his office.

Sixth, The reduction of every establishment to certainty.

Seventh, The dissolution of all subordinate treasuries.

First, with regard to the sovereign jurisdictions, he observed that England was not, as a mere cursory examiner would suppose, a solid, compact, uniform system of monarchy; it was formerly a heptarchy, now a sort of pentarchy. The King, like a chief performer in an itinerant dramatic company, acted not only the principal, but all the subordinate personages in the play. Mr. Burke exemplified this comparison, by shewing the King of England in the various characters of King, Prince of Wales, Duke of Lancaster, Earl of Chester, Count Palatine of Lancaster, and Duke of Cornwall.

In each of these principalities, duchies, palatinates, was a regular establishment of considerable expense and most domineering influence; the apparatus of a kingdom, with the formality and charge of the Exchequer of Great Britain, for collecting the rents of a country squire. Cornwall, which was the best, furnished no exception from the general rule: the duchy and county palatine of Lancaster did not yield more on an average than four thousand pounds a year; and it was doubtful if Wales and Chester made any returns. Wales had eight judges, while all England had but twelve; an exchequer like the rest, according to the very best and most authentic absurdity of form; and there were in all of them a hundred more difficult trifles and laborious fooleries, which served no other purpose than to keep alive corrupt hope and ser-

vile dependence. The duchy of Lancaster was not worth four thousand pounds a year to the revenue, but worth forty or fifty thousand to influence. After entering into an historical account of the annexation of the different fiefs to the crown, and shewing that neither dignity nor family attachment could give the King the least partiality for them, he proposed to unite the five principalities to the crown, and to its ordinary jurisdiction; to abolish all those offices which produced only an useless and chargeable separation from the people; to make compensation to all who did not hold their offices at the pleasure of the Crown; to extinguish vexatious titles by a short act of limitation; to sell the unprofitable estates which supported useless jurisdictions, and turn the tenant-right into a fee on moderate terms, beneficial both to the tenant and the state. The judicial economy of the duchies should fall into the county administrations; and, with respect to Wales, he had doubts whether to add a fifth judge in each of the courts at Westminster, or to suppress five only of the Welch Judges, and let the remaining three perform the business.

On the second head, he proposed to sell all the forest lands, extinguishing the rights of vert and vension, and with them the expensive office of surveyor-general, and two chief justices in eyre, with all their train of dependants: from these sales, only an inconsiderable profit would arise, the chief benefit would be drawn from improved agriculture and increased population.

Professing to approach the civil list, the third division of his subject, with the awe and reverence incident to a young physician who prescribes for the disorders of his parent, Mr. Burke satirized, with great wit and humour, the different establishments and expenses of the royal household, formed on the Gothic system of feudality and purveyance, and still retained, though the royal household had shrunk into the polished littleness of modern elegance and personal accommodation. "It has evaporated," he said, "from the gross "concrete into an essence and rectified spirit of ex-"pense, where you have tons of ancient pomp in a

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"vial of modern luxury." Pursuing the same mode of description and reasoning, through various other objects, he made propositions, the sum of which was, as enumerated by himself, to take away the whole establishment of detail in the household; the treasurer; the comptroller; the cofferer of the household; the treasurer of the chamber; the master of the household; and the whole board of green cloth; and a vast number of subordinate offices in the department of the steward of the household; the whole establishment of the great wardrobe; the removing wardrobe; the jewel office; the robes; the board of works; and almost the whole charge of the civil branch of the board of ordnance; then, he observed, the public might begin to breathe. He went on proposing regulations in the offices of paymaster of the forces and treasurer of the navy, by reducing them from banks or treasuries to mere offices of administration. All the money formerly impressed into these offices he would have impressed into the Bank of England, to which he would also transfer the charge of the mint, and of remittances to the troops on foreign service. He recommended the abolition of the office of paymaster of pensions, and the reduction of the pension list to sixty thousand pounds a year. If any case of extraordinary merit should emerge, he would leave an opening for an address of either House of Parliament; to all other demands, the firm though reluctant answer must be, "the public is poor." He did not mean to abrogate any existing pension, or even to inquire into the merits of the possessor; the discretionary power vested in the Crown was liable to perversion, and he would limit the quantity of power that might be so abused. The pensions granted within seven years amounted, on an average, to a hundred thousand pounds a year: by his regulation an annual saving of forty thousand pounds would at some future period be made to the public, and it were better to let it fall naturally, than tear it crude and unripe from the stalk. The public he knew expected a considerable reform in the great patent offices of the exchequer; he thought

the profits enormous, and proposed limiting the great auditor to three thousand pounds, the inferior auditors, and other principal officers, to fifteen hundred pounds a year each; but, though he considered them as sinecures, he would not consent to their abolition; they were given for life, and it was fit the Crown should have the power of granting pensions, out of the reach of its own caprices,—the possibility of conferring some favours which, while received as rewards, do not operate as corruption. What an unseemly spectacle would it afford, what a disgrace would it be to the commonwealth that suffered such things, to see the hopeful son of a meritorious minister begging his bread at the door of that treasury, from whence his father dispensed the economy of an empire, and promoted the happiness and glory of his country? Why should he be obliged to prostrate his honour, and submit his principles at the levee of some proud favourite, shouldered and thrust aside by every impudent pretender, on the very spot where a few days before he saw himself adored? Obliged to cringe to the author of the calamities of his house, and to kiss the hands that are red with his father's blood? These things are unfit. They are intolerable.

Conceiving himself bound to give as full and clear reasons for stopping as for proceeding in the course of reformation, Mr. Burke laid down some political axioms, no less honourable to his judgment and sagacity than his candour. He did not think the great efficient officers of the state overpaid. What would be just remuneration for one kind of labour, full encouragement for one species of talents, was fraud and discouragement to others. Even if men could be found willing to serve in high situations without salary, they ought not to be permitted: ordinary service must be secured by the motives to ordinary integrity; that state which lays its foundation on rare and heroic virtues, will be sure to have its superstructure in the basest profligacy and corruption. An honourable and fair profit is the best security against avarice and rapa-

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city; as in all things else, a lawful and regulated enjoyment is the best security against debauchery and excess.

It would be expected that, in giving reasons for limiting himself in the reduction of employments, he should advert to those which seemed of eminent utility in the state, the officers attendant on the person of the King: these he determined not to lessen in number or emolument, as they prevented the court from being deserted by all the nobility in the kingdom; he proposed, however, to abolish the keepers of buck-hounds, stag-hounds, fox-hounds, and harriers; they answered no purpose of utility or splendour, and it was unfit for noblemen to be keepers of dogs, even though they were the King's dogs. He concluded this part of his plan by proposing the abolition of the office of the third Secretary of State, or Secretary for the Colonies; and the Board of Trade and Plantations; the office was so useless, that Lord Suffolk held it long after he was wholly disabled by bodily infirmities, and it continued vacant a year after his decease. The Board of Trade he described as a mere job in its original formation and regeneration, costing the public nearly forty thousand pounds a year, without the least utility or advantage; its functions might be performed, like Irish business of the same nature, by the Council, with a reference to the Attorney and Solicitor-General.

He next proceeded to the subject of arrangements, a part of his plan on which he principally relied for bringing up and securing the whole, by fixing an invariable order in all payments from which the First Lord of the Treasury should not, on any pretence, depart. He divided the civil list payments into nine classes; the first was occupied by the Judges; the last by the Commissioners of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer: the reason for assigning each specific position was ably given, and that for placing the First Lord of the Treasury and his colleagues at the bottom of the list, was to protect all the other classes against the effects of profusion and mismanagement;

on this part of his subject, Mr. Burke expatiated in a vein of humorous raillery, enlivened by poignant wit, and diversified with solid argument.

He then presented to the House five bills for carrying into effect the objects indicated in his speech, though he acknowledged he had not the frantic presumption to suppose his plan contained all the public had a right to expect in the great work of reformation. He described the situation of the House of Commons with regard to the people, under the allegory of a jealous husband, and a wife whose conduct, if not stained with guilt, was at least tainted with levity. "Let us return," he said, "to our legitimate home, "and all jars and all quarrels will be lost in embraces. "Let the Commons in Parliament assembled be one "and the same thing with the commons at large. The "distinctions that are made to separate us, are unna- "tural and wicked contrivances. Let us identify, let "us incorporate ourselves with the people. Let us cut "all the cabals, and snap the chains which tie us to an "unfaithful shore, and enter the friendly harbour that "shoots far out into the main its moles and jetties to "receive us. 'War with the world, and peace with "'our constituents.' Be this our motto and our "principle. Then, indeed, we shall be truly great*."

Mr. Fox seconded the motion, and Lord North, paying very high compliments to Mr. Burke and his speech, declared that he should not oppose the introduction of the first bill, although he reserved to himself the right of objecting to it in any stage of its progress. It was a measure, he observed, affecting patrimony and hereditary revenue: in all such cases, it was invariably the custom of Parliament, first to obtain the consent of the parties interested; and he

* I have given an unusually copious extract of this celebrated speech, which is entitled to serious and frequent perusal, as containing the sentiments of an eminent statesman on many of the important topics connected with reform and economy. The zeal of party, and the state of the times, gave birth to projects not altogether consistent with propriety, or commensurate to the dignity of the subject; but the general axioms, and the political principles, which extend to the whole system of government, are remarkable for their wisdom, temperance, and justice. The speech at length is in Burke's Works, 4to. vol. ii. p. 115; 8vo. vol. i. p. 229; and in the Parliamentary History, vol. xxi. p. 1.

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submitted to the House, whether it was not within the rules of decency and decorum to pay to his Majesty and the Prince of Wales, whose patrimony and hereditary revenue were materially involved, the same respect as would be shewn to any subject of the realm under similar circumstances. Mr. Burke, although he maintained his right, consented to waive that portion of his motion, out of respect to the Crown. The close of the debate is only remarkable through the intemperance of Lord George Gordon, who maintained that Mr. Burke's was a most unconstitutional speech, and the whole affair a mere juggle between him and Lord North. He proposed to divide the House against the question, and two tellers for the ayes were named, but not one member could be found to associate himself with Lord George Gordon as teller on the opposite side.

Vote for abolishing the Board of Trade.

The progress of the inquiry into this plan engaged the attention of the House during a great part of the session; the debates on various clauses of the bills were animated, and replete with wit and eloquence; but the only result of the scheme was a vote abolishing the board of trade, which fell a victim to the wit of Mr. Burke, directed against some topics urged in its defence, much more than to its own want of utility, cumbrousness of expense, or extent of patronage. The Lords of Trade were eight; the net produce of their salaries between seven and eight hundred pounds a-year; and their labours were comprised in two thousand three hundred folio volumes, a circumstance which Mr. Burke ridiculed with great effect; but, allowing that each of these folios should contain a fair proportion of dulness, still it could not be denied that many sane principles were discussed, many important facts authenticated, many sagacious projects recommended, and many erroneous speculations exposed. Perhaps the period when this board was subsequently abolished, was the very moment when its active functions could have been most beneficially exerted: when commerce was about to receive a new impulse and unprecedented extension; encouraged by circumstances

never foreseen, yet embarrassed by litigations, involved in the discordant interest of rivals, and encumbered with questions, both legal and political, respecting charters, monopoly, and paper credit, requiring the utmost calmness in investigation and firmness in decision*.

8th Feb. Commission of accounts appointed.

While Mr. Burke's project of economy and reform was yet depending, several auxiliary propositions were made in both Houses; among the most prominent of which was the appointment of a commission of accounts, in conformity to the practice in the reigns of King William and Queen Anne, and almost regularly from the second year after the Revolution to 1715. This subject was introduced to the House of Lords by the Earl of Shelburne, in pursuance of a notice he had given before the Christmas recess. In an able speech, he accused the minister of deluding the public in respect to finance, misappropriating the sinking fund, misusing the votes of credit, and extending to an improper degree the confidence of the Bank. He reviewed the mode of voting army extraordinaries, and descanted with severity on the supposed frauds of contractors: his project embraced also many of the topics included in Mr. Burke's plan, which was not yet submitted to the House. It was answered that the bills passed in the reigns of William and Anne had been discontinued, because they were found to answer no good purpose, and owed their origin and existence to party. After the firm establishment of the house of Hanover on the throne, when faction, tumult, and sedition were crushed, and the continual fluctuation of counsels which distracted and perplexed the two preceding reigns gave place to steadiness and stability, the annual law for examining, controlling, and stating the public accounts was discontinued. The

* The reader, whose curiosity shall lead him to pursue the train of the debates on Burke's plan in Debrett's Parliamentary Register, vol. xvii. will find enough of wisdom, wit, and ingenious argument to repay him for the time employed. The most instructive and entertaining debates will be found at pp. 127, 156, 195, 228, 237, 254, 295, 374, and 588; or in the Parliamentary History, vol. xxi. pp. 111, 150, 171, 193, 233, 296, 538, and 616.—See also an account of this motion in Gibbon's Posthumous Works, vol. i. p. 156, et seq.

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debate, which was very long, and embraced many other topics of enforcement and objection, ended by a rejection of the motion*; thirty-five peers subscribed a protest.

14th Feb. Colonel Barré's motion.

On the reception of Mr. Burke's propositions, Colonel Barré suggested the necessity of some addition; he did not think the reform sufficiently extensive, which permitted men of overgrown wealth to hold unreduced offices in the exchequer, reaping advantages from the wars and calamities of their country. The extraordinaries of the army struck him with surprise; and all his efforts had failed to procure satisfactory explanations. He, therefore, proposed, on some future day, to move for a commission of accounts. Lord North heartily coincided; he was ever ready to receive beneficial propositions from either side of the House; considered the course of the Exchequer inimical to speedy and effectual controul; and should, for the sake of clearness and precision in the public accounts, sanction the measure of a committee, though convinced it would be impossible to reduce all expenses to an estimate.

2nd March. Lord North's bill.

Colonel Barré, after being thus supported by the minister, and giving him credit for the liberality and manliness of his sentiments, felt no small mortification when Lord North gave notice of his intention to move for leave to bring in a bill appointing a commission, not only to inquire into past expenditure, but into the current accounts. The minister was chiefly impelled to undertake this measure by the observations which some members had made respecting his declaration on Colonel Barré's notice of motion, that it was not sincere, but a mere parliamentary trick; an attempt to gain momentary popularity by affecting readiness to do what in reality he did not intend. As an indisputable proof of his real sentiments, he said, he should bring in the bill now suggested; and, to obviate all objections, respecting the nomination of a committee from one or the other side of the House, should propose for that

* 101 to 55.

purpose men who were not members. Colonel Barré, protesting that he did not believe the history of Parliament afforded an instance of a similar transaction, declared himself ready to forego all complaints; and, if the minister really meant a benefit to the country, he would cheerfully concur and rejoice in it, though the merit due to him should be attributed to another. The bill was, however, opposed with considerable warmth during its whole progress. It was decried as tending to create new places in the gift of the Crown, with large salaries, extensive influence, and new patronage, branching out into the lower departments of clerks, accountants, and messengers, at the very time that the people were petitioning for reduction of expenses, and contraction of influence. The nomination of commissioners occasioned a spirited debate. Sir Guy Carleton being the first named, many ludicrous animadversions were made on his change of employ from the truncheon to the pen. No part of the project escaped acrimonious censure; yet the bill was passed; gentlemen of the first talent and respectability were appointed commissioners*; and their reports, presented to the House, and given to the public in various forms, are highly honourable to their industry and ability, and an excellent body of political information.

1st May.

Among other popular measures recommended in Mr. Burke's speech on introducing his plan of reform, were the revival of the bill of last year for excluding contractors from sitting in Parliament, and that for suspending the votes of revenue officers, which was formerly moved by Mr. Dowdeswell. Sir Philip Jennings Clerke, availing himself of the intimation, reintroduced his former unsuccessful bill, which passed the House of Commons almost unresisted, and apparently unnoticed. In the House of Lords it met with strong and effectual opposition: to exclude tax-gatherers, it was said, might be reasonable and just, as they might be needy and liable to corruption: but it

Bills for excluding contractors and suspending the votes of revenue officers rejected.

24th Feb.

14th April.

* Sir Guy Carleton, Thomas Anguish, Arthur Piggot, Richard Neave, Samuel Beachroft, and George Drummond, Esquires.

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was incompatible with justice to exclude merchants of great property and respectability merely because they happened to be engaged fairly and openly in contracts with government: it would be unjust to deprive individuals of their right, without proof of their having abused it, an illiberal and cruel stigma on a respectable body of men, and a mean compliance with popular prejudice, unworthy the House of Lords. Besides, the regulation could not in all cases be effectual; contracts for secret expeditions must be secretly made; and the twenty days' notice required by this bill could not possibly be given when a sudden expedition was thought necessary. In favour of the measure, the usual ground was taken, the prodigality, ignorance, and imposition which characterized the parties to modern contracts were displayed in the highest colours; and it was argued that, as the bill affected the Commons alone, its rejection by the Lords would be an insult on that body; such had been the reasoning of Lord Mansfield on the Middlesex election; and, if applicable then, it was equally cogent in the present instance. The bill was rejected*; but a protest, to which twenty-six peers signed their names as concurring partially or totally in the component articles, was placed on the journals.

Mr. Crewe introduced the bill for preventing revenue officers from voting, which was rejected on the second reading†: the arguments were not new or important.

Account of places.

All these debates, and many others which engaged the attention of the House, had constant reference to the petitions which were daily received, and continually expatiated on the popular text, the necessity of economy, and the increasing influence of the Crown. As pensions and places were the principal objects embraced in this plan of censure, Sir George Savile obtained, without opposition, an order that an account of all places, and the salaries annexed to them, should be laid before the House; but when he proceeded to

15th Feb.

And of pensions paid at

* 61 to 41. † 224 to 195.

require an account of all pensions, whether paid at the Exchequer or out of the privy-purse, for life, years, or at pleasure, the motion was strenuously resisted.

This debate was interrupted by the indisposition of the Speaker, which occasioned a short suspension of business. When the sittings of Parliament were resumed, Lord North moved an amendment, by which the pensions payable at the Exchequer only should be published. He exposed the delusion practised on the public in stating the pretended amount of the pension-list, and affirmed that, deducting the monies paid under that denomination for real services, and as actual salaries, and the land tax on pensions, which returned into the coffers of the state, the whole sum did not amount to fifty thousand pounds a year, being ten thousand less than was proposed to be allowed by Mr. Burke's economical scheme. The debate terminated in a violent uproar, occasioned by an unwarrantable personality of Colonel Barré, who said, not one Englishman had risen to support the minister; his principal defenders were, the Attorney-General (Mr. Wedderburne), and the Lord Advocate of Scotland (Mr. Dundas). When the ferment occasioned by this national remark subsided, the amendment of the minister was carried by a majority of two only*.

the Exchequer laid before the House.

21st Feb.

The same subject was introduced to the Upper House by the Earl of Effingham, in a motion for a list of all pensions enjoyed by peers of Parliament: the debate was conducted with some warmth; the state of the Scotch peerage was severely animadverted on, and ably defended. The proposition was lost by a considerable majority†.

10th March.

In all the debates of this session, the most licentious invectives were indulged; and it appeared the wish of political opponents to urge parliamentary altercation to unpardonable extremes of personal animosity. In consequence of some words spoken on the first day of the session, and misrepresented in a newspaper

Duels between members of Parliament.

29th March, 1779.

* 188 to 186. † 51 to 24.

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report, Mr. Adam engaged in a duel with Mr. Fox, and wounded him slightly in the body.

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6th March. On the removal of Lord Carmarthen from the lord lieutenancy of the East Riding of Yorkshire, and of the Earl of Pembroke from that of Wilts, Lord Shelburne moved for an address to ascertain the advisers of those measures*. In the course of his speech the Earl reflected in contemptuous terms on the appointment of Mr. Fullarton to the command of a new-raised regiment, with the temporary rank of lieutenant-colonel, mentioning him as a *commis*†. Colonel Fullarton, highly resenting the attack, another duel was the consequence, in which Lord Shelburne was wounded. Sir James Lowther made the transaction the subject of a conversation (for there was no motion), in the House of Commons, by declaring if questions of a public nature were tried by appeals to the sword, the British Parliament would soon resemble a Polish diet. Mr. Adam explained, in the most handsome manner, his difference with Mr. Fox; but the discussion produced no consequences‡.

20th March.

22nd.

Debates on the raising of volunteer regiments.

Colonel Fullarton incurred this attack in consequence of having raised a regiment for the service of government, an effort of zeal which gave peculiar offence to opposition, and which they omitted no opportunity of decrying. In a debate on the army extraordinaries, Mr. Fox, with great bitterness, censured the manner of obtaining these levies, and of giving and withholding preferment: he animadverted with severity on the appointment of the honourable George North, eldest son of the minister, to the command of the Cinque Ports' regiment, on the promotion of Colonel Fullarton, and particularly on the conduct of Colonel Holroyd (Lord Sheffield), which he had totally misconceived. The attack, however, produced an ex-

5th April.

* It was negatived, 92 to 39.

† He had been employed under Lord Stormont in the embassy to Paris.

‡ Addresses of congratulation were voted by many of the corresponding committees to Lord Shelburne, and some pretty plainly insinuated that he owed his danger to the resentment of government at the part he had taken in behalf of the people.

planation highly honourable: Colonel Holroyd replied that the members of opposition, far from being willing to assist the public cause, could not repress their indignation against those who endeavoured to be useful, even at the moment of an alarming crisis. When the French and Spanish fleets were off the coast, he had offered to raise light troops without expense to the country, which he did in a very short time, and the circumstance it was intended to arraign, was far from being advantageous to him, and only beneficial to the service, and to the officers, who all came from old regiments. No situation in the army could be more agreeable to him than that he already held in the Sussex militia: nor could any remuneration in the power of government, compensate for the neglect of his private affairs, and the desertion of his home: a home which he had scarcely seen since the commencement of the war. His contempt for such insinuations would have kept him silent, had not the respect due to Parliament rendered some explanation necessary; no man in that House, or in England, was more independent in principle, disposition, or situation. He was not personally known to any member of administration; but, in the present crisis, he considered it his duty to support the servants of the public against those who were endeavouring to *take the government by storm*. This happy and just expression was often afterward quoted with undiminished effect.

13th March. Altercation between Lord North and Sir Fletcher Norton.

An altercation of more political importance occurred between the minister and the speaker of the House of Commons. Sir Fletcher Norton, dissatisfied at the failure of some expectations of aggrandizement, had formed an intimate connexion with the opposition. The first public display of this sentiment occurred in a debate on Mr. Burke's plan of economy, when Mr. Rigby having attempted to establish as a principle, that Parliament had no right to inquire into the expenditure of the civil list, Mr. Fox, who had previously secured the opinion of the speaker, took occasion to introduce the subject in a committee, and referred to him for a decision, which was given in

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1780.

direct contradiction to the axiom of administration. If the minister was astonished at this desertion, he was not less surprised at the declaration with which Sir Fletcher Norton accompanied it; that Lord North and he were not friends, nor had any confidential or friendly intercourse subsisted between them, since the time when, in fulfilling his duty, he had conveyed the sentiments of Parliament to the foot of the throne; a recent transaction rendered it necessary for him and the noble lord to stand on the most unequivocal terms. Being pressed to explain the last insinuation, he stated, that at the pressing request of the Duke of Grafton, communicated through Mr. Rigby, he had consented, on the death of Sir John Cust, to accept the speaker's chair; but his compliance was accompanied with an express reservation, that an opening should be kept for his return to Westminster Hall, on the first eligible vacancy. Although this promise was positively made, and although he was well entitled to a preference from his long standing at the bar, high professional character, and being the only lawyer at that time in the cabinet, he had now the mortification to find that a negotiation was carrying on to prevail on Sir William de Grey, the Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, to resign, and place the Attorney-General in his room. This he considered an injury, as the individual thus preferred was not, by length of practice, or professional reputation, qualified to impede his claims. The minister denied that he was responsible for promises made by his predecessors in office; and, after a long personal altercation between Lord North and the speaker, Mr. Wedderburne, with polished wit, exposed the arrogance and absurdity of Sir Fletcher's pretensions. He said it was disgracing the profession, degrading his character, and betraying the interest of the country, to seek sinecure emolument as a compensation for quitting a practice in which he could secure honourable independency; yet the speaker did not hesitate to avow, that he had received the most valuable sinecure he enjoyed (the Chief Justiceship in Eyre,) for transacting the business of the privy-council.

But it was not true, as he asserted, that there was then no person of the profession belonging to that board; Sir Eardly Wilmot, late Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, Mr. Sewell, Master of the Rolls, Lord Mansfield, Lord Bathurst, the Chancellor, and all the customary law officers, had seats in council. With respect to himself, he was as ready to allow as the Speaker was to assert, that in point of character, standing, pretensions, and education, he was not equally with him qualified for a common law court; but since Sir Fletcher had quitted Westminster Hall, to slide first into an ample sinecure, and next into the chair of that house, he could not be offended if many who continued to labour with industry and assiduity in the field he had deserted, looked forward also to the reward of their labours, and the gratification of their ambition. He considered the office of judge too delicate in its nature and execution to be the object of solicitation; nor would he be so forgetful of propriety as to make personal differences matter of public complaint; so lost to decorum as to call on the House to interfere in a private negotiation; he would never so humble his own character as to make a disagreement with a minister the ground of his opinion on a great and important political regulation. From this period Sir Fletcher Norton joined the cry of opposition, and spoke with all the fervour of party on the influence of the Crown, the abuses of prerogative, and the rights of the people: a strong illustration of Sir Robert Walpole's recipe for making a patriot*.

Numerous petitions.

During these violent altercations, petitions were daily laid before the House, in introducing which many members used language showing a firm reliance on an extraneous interference, which should regulate by terror the deliberations of Parliament. Sir George Savile, on presenting the York petition, said the ministry would not dare to refuse hearing it, though the

8th Feb. Intemperate language in introducing them.

* "Patriots," he said, "spring up like mushrooms; I could raise fifty of "them within four-and-twenty hours. I have raised many of them in one night. "It is but refusing to gratify an unreasonable or an insolent demand, and up "starts a patriot." Coxe's Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, quarto, vol. i. p. 659.

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1780

prayer might be eluded by artifice and juggling; yet if Parliament mocked the people, the people would learn not to respect Parliament. The petition was not presented by men with swords and muskets, nor instigated by a few incendiaries, operating on simple and credulous individuals in hedge ale-houses: it was moved in an assembly of six hundred gentlemen, in a hall, the walls of which enclosed more property than those of the House of Commons. Mr. Fox used language equally strong in offering the Westminster petition; and Sir James Lowther, in presenting that from Cumberland, said, "if the House should turn a deaf ear to "so respectable a body of subscribers, they would do "themselves justice by withholding the taxes. Ministers might think to dragoon them into the payment, "but such measures of coercion would be attended with "consequences too horrid for even them to venture. "If a legal course of enforcement were attempted, let "administration reflect who would be the juries, and "consider whether they were likely to obtain a single "verdict." Against several of these petitions, protests and counter-petitions were presented, which called down all the vehemence of opposition. On the protest against the Hereford petition, Mr. Barrow petulantly observed, that it had been mostly signed by the gentry at and about the cathedral, with the bishop at their head. So long as these people were permitted to batten in idleness on the labour and industry of their fellow-subjects, they would do well to conduct themselves with moderation and decency, lest the rage of reformation should forcibly inculcate those lessons. They enjoyed sinecure places, and were in the receipt of enormous profits and exorbitant emoluments; it was therefore matter of surprise that they were not included in the letter, as they manifestly were in the spirit, of the petitions. He was averse to partialities; and though full and adequate rewards for services were but equitable, yet a parcel of idle, luxurious, proud, and overbearing fellows, sleeping in their stalls, and supported by the toil, sweat, and laborious industry of the middle and lower ranks, was an evil repug-

13th March.

5th April.

8th Mar.

nant to natural justice and sound policy; disgraceful and injurious to true religion. The clergy were no less virulently and indecently abused by Mr. Turner, who called them friends of arbitrary power, enemies of the free constitution which fed and protected them, and dangerous engines of state in the hands of an ambitious prince or wicked administration. During the reigns of James I, and that obstinate and perverse tyrant Charles, his son, they had preached the most scandalous and shameful doctrines, and were the chief cause of the fatal end of that tyrant, whom their successors still affected to deify. They still propagated the same dangerous doctrines in their writings and discourses, and there was no foundation on which arbitrary power could be erected equal to a standing army and a dependent church.

The efforts used to enforce the adoption of measures consistent with the petitions, were conformable to the violence of language which accompanied their introduction. Sir George Savile intimated, that until the petitioners received some assurance of relief, it would be advisable to vote the loan piece-meal, according to the requisitions of the public service; and when the committee brought up the report of ways and means, a motion was made for deferring it till the day after that appointed for discussing the petitions; but the proposition was feebly supported, and rejected by a large majority*.

6th March.

22nd.

The important day destined for discussing the petitions was anticipated with eager expectation, and met with all the zeal and all the address of party. A meeting of the inhabitants of Westminster was convened by direction of the corresponding committee, a report from that body read and descanted on by Mr. Fox, who was supported by the Dukes of Devonshire and Portland, and many other anti-ministerial leaders. Government, foreseeing the effect of this manœuvre in over-awing the proceedings of the legislature, drew forth the military, and stationed a considerable body in

6th April. Discussion of the petitions.

* 145 to 37.

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the neighbourhood of Westminster Hall*. A call of the House was also ordered, and petitions continued to be presented till the commencement of the debate. These popular missives amounted to forty, and were subscribed with so many names, that the mass of parchment seemed rather calculated to bury than cover the speaker's table†.

Mr. Dunning.

Mr. Dunning opened the business of the day. Independently of the great objects recommended to the attention of Parliament by the petitions, varying according to the particular ideas of the several classes of petitioners, there was one great fundamental point, he observed, on which they all hinged, that of setting limits to, and paring down the increased, dangerous, and alarming influence of the Crown, and an economical expenditure of the public money. In one view, both these objects might be consolidated into one principle: if the public money was faithfully applied and frugally expended, that would reduce the influence of the Crown; or, if the influence of the Crown was restrained within its natural and constitutional limits, it would restore that power which the constitution had vested in the House, of inquiring into and controlling the expenditure of public money. But, in pursuance of the objects held forth and recommended in the petitions, he should divide the principle, and propose some remedy, or frame some resolution, which would serve as a basis on which he might erect a system of measures to answer the purposes and comply with the wishes of the petitioners. He reviewed with great severity the conduct of ministers with respect to Mr. Burke's plan of economy; they had received it with a

* This exertion of government was severely arraigned by opposition, and formed the subject of several conversations, and at length of a motion by Sir William Meredith: the debate was exceedingly warm. Burke, in a most violent speech, reprobated the Middlesex magistrates as the scum of the earth; carpenters, brickmakers, and shoemakers; some of whom were notoriously men of such infamous character, as to be unworthy of any employ whatever; many so ignorant that they could scarcely write their own names. How dare such reptiles to call out a body of the military armed, upon such a peaceable and respectable meeting? Mr. Fox declared that if armed men were thus let loose on the constitutional meetings of the people, all who frequented them must go armed. See Commons' Debates, 8th May.

† The expression in the Annual Register for 1780, p. 165.

show of candour, a kind of mock approbation, but afterward declared all the material objects it proposed to attain, fundamentally wrong. Colonel Barré's suggestion of a committee of accounts had been, in an uncandid, ungentlemanlike manner, snatched out of his hands, and commissioners appointed who were not members of Parliment, but mere nominees of the minister. The bill for excluding contractors had passed that House, but ministers and their friends confidently predicted its rejection in the House of Lords; so that all which had been done in consequence of the pile of parchment on the table, containing the sentiments and petitions of above a hundred thousand electors, amounted to no more than the adoption of one single clause of Mr. Burke's bill, which, standing thus naked and solitary, was of little or no importance. He trusted, however, that the people of England would resent the insult they had sustained from those who, to oppression and neglect, had added mockery and contempt. The great objects of the petitioners had been resisted in argument, and by the public avowals of the minister and his friends. They had asserted, in contradiction to the petitioners, that the influence of the Crown was not too extensive, and ought not to be retrenched; and that the House was not competent to inquire into the expenditure of the civil list. To bring these points fairly to issue, he would abstract two propositions from the petitions, short, simple, and calculated to draw forth a direct affirmative or negative. If the committee agreed in them, he should propose real, substantive, practical measures; but should they disagree or dissent, or endeavour to evade or procrastinate, there would be at once an end of the petitions, and a full answer to the petitioners.

His first proposition was, "that the influence of "the Crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to "be diminished." His motion.

The opponents of this dangerous axiom argued that it was not fairly deduced from the petitions, unsupported by evidence, and of a nature too abstract for Opposed.

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1780.

the House to decide in the shape of a vote. It tended to no given object, for it did not affect to say that the influence of the Crown was in itself improper, or had been unfairly increased, but made a leap from two isolated assertions to an unfounded conclusion, that the influence ought to be diminished. Lord Nugent observed that Blackstone and Hume, who were quoted by Mr. Dunning, had said that the influence of the Crown began to show itself in 1742; he sat in Parliament before that period, when similar speculations and clamours had long prevailed; but then, and still, he considered them totally unfounded.

Supported.

The general events of Lord North's administration were cited to prove that, by the corrupt influence of the Crown, he retained his office in opposition to the sense of the nation. His whole business, for a series of years, had been to make excuses and devise expedients; to find supplies from year to year, without inventing any method in finance, any scheme of supply, comprehensive or permanent. The people would bear taxes, though enormous, when they heard of victories and an extension of commerce and territory; but were apt to judge of ministers, not from ingenious excuses made for their conduct, either by themselves or others, but from the success that followed their measures. Sir Fletcher Norton also made a long speech in support of the motion; affirming the exorbitant power of the Crown, and the increase of corrupt influence. If members thought proper to vote the petitions of so many thousands of the people false and unfounded, he wished them joy in the prospect of meeting their constituents.

It was already apparent, from the temper of the House, and the effect of many personal arguments, that the division would be hostile to the wishes of administration; Mr. Dundas therefore moved that the chairman should leave the chair; a proposition, which, being understood to stifle the inquiry, was ill received and unsupported.

Lord North vindicated his own conduct with great

candour; he never had insinuated that his abilities were equal to his situation; he had always declared his readiness to retire whenever his sovereign and the people should wish it; but, if it were true, as had been asserted, that he was kept in office by the efforts of opposition, he could not but suppose he owed his continuance in place to the exertions of those who had formerly contended against the rights of the people of Great Britain, and were now known to be pursuing measures calculated to subvert the constitution.

Resolutions passed respecting the influence of the Crown.

After the discussion had been protracted to a great length, Mr. Dundas obtained leave to withdraw his motion for vacating the chair, and to add, as an amendment to the original proposition, the words, "it is now "necessary to declare." Mr. Fox, readily acceding to the amendment, enforced the principle of the original motion, by saying that, if it was negatived, not only the committee, but the House should never sit again. It appears that the Lord-Advocate's reason for this amendment was founded on a certainty of the superior strength of opposition; and, as his former effort was merely directed to gain time, his present aim was to convert that which was projected as a general assertion to a temporary declaration, which might at any subsequent period be retracted or disavowed. The amended motion was carried by a majority of eighteen*.

The expenditure of the civil-list:

Mr. Dunning, pursuing his success, moved a second resolution, "that it was competent to the House, "whenever they thought proper, to examine into and "correct abuses in the expenditure of the civil-list "revenues." To this proposition, only a feeble resistance was offered: the minister, with more reason than probability of success, deprecating the further proceeding of the committee.

and the relief of the people.

A third motion, made by Mr. Thomas Pitt, and similarly deprecated by Lord North, also passed without a division; affirming that it was the duty of the House to provide immediate and effectual redress of the abuses complained of in the petitions.

Resolutions reported.

As if afraid of giving the House a moment for

* 233 to 215.

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1780.

recollection, Mr. Fox moved, at past one o'clock in the morning, that the resolutions should be immediately reported; Lord North in vain opposed the proceeding, as violent, arbitrary, and unusual; the report was brought up, and the House adjourned.

10th April. Motion for account of monies paid to members of Parliament.

On the next sitting of the committee, Mr. Dunning moved that, in order to secure the independence of Parliament, and obviate all suspicions of its purity, the proper officer should, in future, within seven days after the meeting, lay before the House an account of all monies paid out of the civil-list, or any part of the public revenue, to, or for the use of, or in trust for, any member of Parliament. However unfounded the suspicion might be, he said, the public firmly believed that large sums were conveyed into the pockets of their representatives. If any members did unduly possess themselves of the public money, this proposition would distinguish them; if not, it would be acceded to without difficulty. Slight objections were made to the motion, as proposing a test which might be unpleasant to the upper House, and beget differences; but it was carried without a division.

Vote for rendering certain officers incapable of sitting.

Mr. Dunning next proposed a resolution, that the Treasurer of the Chamber, Treasurer, Cofferer, Comptroller, and Master of the Household, the Clerks of the Green-Cloth, and their deputies, should be rendered incapable of sitting in the House of Commons. This motion encountered considerable opposition, and, on a division of the committee, the majority in favour of the opposition was reduced to two*.

14th. Illness of the Speaker. Adjournment.

Before the next sitting of the committee, the indisposition of the Speaker occasioned an adjournment of ten days, which was moved by Mr. Dunning, and sanctioned by the general body of opposition, although objected to by Lord North, as inconvenient, and detrimental to the pursuit of public business.

24th. Motion against dissolving Parliament.

When the speaker had sufficiently recovered to attend his duty, Mr. Dunning moved an address, requesting the King "not to dissolve the Parliament, or

* 215 to 213.

" prorogue the session, till proper measures should be " adopted for diminishing the influence of the Crown, " and correcting the other evils complained of in the " petitions." He sarcastically alluded to the unusual fulness of the House, hoping the new comers would show their zeal for their country, their regard for the people, and their abhorrence of undue influence, by supporting the motion, and that the two hundred and thirty-three of the sixth of April would receive an augmentation of twenty or thirty. Mr. Thomas Pitt, who seconded the motion, read resolutions of the Cambridge county meeting, approving the late proceedings, and conjured the House not to repress the budding confidence of the nation, and inspire popular rage; when the people were once inflamed, who could stop them, or say, " thus far shalt thou go and no farther ?"

Mr. Adam.

Mr. Adam was the most conspicuous opponent of the motion, and made a speech of extraordinary ability, showing the improper foundation of the petitions, and the error of those who had devised an appeal to the people. He painted in terms no less animated than just, the dangers of beginning a reformation by means of the people, and cited the memorable days of Charles I, to prove that, although human intellect and virtue were then at their greatest height; though the patriots who began an opposition to the court were justified by the most imperious motives, yet they were compelled by increasing licentiousness to withdraw from active interference, and doomed to view the overthrow of the constitution, and the establishment of the most oppressive and arbitrary despotism that had ever cursed a nation.

Mr Fox.

Mr. Fox made a spirited reply, ascribing the misfortunes of Charles to the obstinacy and insincerity of his character, and to the omission of an early attention to the wishes of his subjects, which would have prevented all the calamities of his reign and mischiefs which succeeded it. The ministry and their prostitute followers had spared no pains, scrupled at no means to traduce, calumniate and vilify those who opposed them; personal weakness, follies of youth and foibles of age,

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1779.

had been exhibited to the public as enormous crimes; some were abused for being too rich, others for being too poor, and slight indiscretions were converted into grievous accusations. But would these artifices induce them to abandon their own vote, the glorious vote of the sixth of April? a vote which the present motion alone could carry into effect. The House was solemnly pledged to redress grievances; like an individual who enters into a bond with a penalty, they were bound to reduce the undue influence of the Crown, and the penalty of non-performance would be a forfeiture of the affections of the people.

The motion was reprobated by Lord George Germaine, as an improper mode of abridging the royal prerogative. Mr. Dundas ridiculed it as a recruiting officer sent out by opposition to beat up for grievances and enlist motions. It was rejected by a majority of fifty-one*.

Rejected.

Indignation of Mr. Fox.

After the division, Mr. Fox, in a philippic no less eloquent than severe, expressed his indignant resentment at the vote, which he termed treacherous, scandalous, and disgraceful. Not so in those who opposed the proposition of the sixth of April; they acted consistently, and like men differing upon principle, and would have been guilty of shameful versatility, had they abandoned the measures they once avowed. But who could contemplate, without mingled indignation and surprise, the conduct of another set of men, who, after voting with him that the influence of the Crown ought to be diminished, pledging themselves to the House, their constituents, the people at large, to each other, and to themselves, for the redress of grievances, abandoned that solemn engagement by rejecting the means proposed: it was shameful, it was base, it was unmanly, it was treacherous. The contempt he felt for those who were at the devotion of the minister was mingled sometimes with pity, and sometimes with so much respect as was due to the solitary virtue of fidelity, gratitude, or consistency. They did not *take*

* 254 to 203.

in their patron or their friends with false hopes or delusive promises; they divided regularly with the minister, through thick and thin, on every question. To concur in general propositions, and refuse assent to effective ones, was a paradox in party and in politics; he was *taken in*, deluded, imposed upon. He trusted, however, that such gross tergiversation would never pass without detection, nor fail to be followed by the contempt it deserved; he did not despair that the people would see and pursue their own interest at a general election, that they would learn to distinguish between their open friends and foes, and their worst of enemies, the concealed ones.

Lord North. Lord North extended the protection of his eloquence to those who had drawn on themselves this severe attack; he said, Mr. Fox's language was such as no provocation could justify; it was indecent and improper; an invective, and not a parliamentary speech. He bantered the leader of opposition with considerable humour and effect on his irritability at finding himself in a minority again, after having, for a short moment of his life, been in a majority, and contrasted it with his own philosophical calmness, when he stood in a situation so unexpected and novel. He did not think himself justified in rising in the anguish of defeat and disappointment, and accusing those who had frequently voted with him, of baseness, treachery, versatility, and other improper motives; and he advised Mr. Fox not to be, for the future, so rash and hasty.

Further proceedings on the petitions. Although Lord North truly observed, on this occasion, that the petitions, and the resolutions framed on them, were still before the House, and the rejection of one single measure did not preclude the right of further consideration, yet this defeat of opposition did, in fact, conclude the discussion. A motion, by Serjeant Adair, for withholding the grant of further supplies, till the grievances of the people were redressed, was negatived without a debate*; and when Mr. Dunning moved to receive the report of the committee on the

19th May.

26th. Report of the committee refused.

* 89 to 54.

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1780. Observations.

tenth of April, the question for the chairman's quitting the chair was carried by a majority of forty-three*.

Such was the termination of this famous contest, which, considering the means used to interest the people, the strenuous exertions of opposition, the alarming tendency of the resolutions past on the sixth and tenth of April, and the menacing aspect of the times, may be pronounced one of the most critical struggles which the constitution had ever sustained.

It will naturally strike the reader with as much astonishment as it did the public, that a House of Commons which had so warmly adopted the American war, and supported the measures of government with such large majorities, should assent to Mr. Dunning's extraordinary motion against the influence of the Crown, and for the exclusion from Parliament of persons holding certain offices. It will appear no less inconceivable, that, having manifested so decided a determination to overturn the ministry, the same House should, after a recess of only fourteen days, negative the subsequent motions.

This sudden change has been attributed to influence and corruption, and those independent members who thus thwarted the effects of their former vote have been accused of inconsistency and treachery; but their conduct in both cases naturally resulted from the temper of the times, the state of the ministry, and the violence of opposition.

The distracted state of Ireland, the unsuccessful progress of the war in America, and the degraded condition of the English navy, which had allowed the united fleets of France and Spain to ride triumphant in the channel and menace the British coasts, excited general alarm and indignation. The divided state of the cabinet, the candid and easy temper of Lord North, and the unpopularity of Lord Sandwich and Lord George Germaine, increased the ferment and apprehensions of the nation, and induced many independent members of the House of Commons, who were warm

* 177 to 134.

friends to government, to second the efforts of opposition. On the other hand, the Marquis of Rockingham and Sir George Savile's character for integrity, the manly spirit of Mr. Fox, and the splendid talents of Mr. Burke, inspired hope, and the Parliament, as well as the people, were inclined to any measure, not detrimental to the constitution, which was likely to substitute an efficient cabinet for a distracted ministry.

Such was the general disposition at the time of Mr. Dunning's first motion on the influence of the Crown, which was therefore carried by a majority of eighteen. But on his second motion, for the exclusion of persons holding certain offices, the violence of the opposition had already disgusted many of their new adherents, and the question passed by a majority of only two. In this situation, the illness of the Speaker occasioned an adjournment of ten days, after which, the opposition, in the too eager pursuit of their advantages, alarmed the moderate party by a proposition, which tended not merely to diminish, but to annihilate the power of the Crown, and revive the tyranny of the long Parliament. Consequently the House rejected, by a majority of fifty-one, the last motion of Mr. Dunning.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-EIGHTH.

1778—1779—1780—1781.

Effects of appeals to the people.—Origin and progress of the riots in Edinburgh and Glasgow on the subject of popery.—Formation of Protestant associations.—Discussions in Parliament.—Corresponding committees established.—Lord George Gordon elected president of the Protestant associations.—Effects of debating societies.—Intemperance of Lord George Gordon.—Petitions to Parliament against the Catholics.—London petition.—Meeting at Coachmakers' Hall.—Meeting of petitioners in St. George's Fields.—Motion by the Duke of Richmond for a reform of Parliament.—The members insulted.—The House of Commons interrupted.—Chapels of ambassadors burnt.—Riots subside—and are renewed.—Privy council held.—Proclamation.—Riots more alarming.—Parliament adjourned.—Numerous conflagrations.—Timidity of government.—Second Privy Council.—Exertions of the military.—The riots quelled.—Lord George Gordon committed to the Tower.—King's speech on the riots.—Lord Mansfield's opinion on military interference.—Petitions rejected by Parliament.—Judicious speech from the throne on terminating the session.—Political effect of the riots.—Trial of the rioters—and of Lord George Gordon.—Dissolution of Parliament.

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1778.

Effect of appeals to the people.

It is a misfortune ever attendant on appeals to the people in questions of government, that the first measures, however reasonable and moderate, are perverted by enthusiasts or intriguers. Extravagant or designing men, assuming the direction of the populace, find it easy to obtain a dangerous ascendancy; and, through their want of discretion, or want of integrity to guide aright the steps of the erring and giddy multitude,

tremendous effects are the result of causes apparently inadequate, and in their origin contemptibly insignificant. While men of the first talent and fortune were, by means which they considered constitutional and regular, attempting to excite in the minds of the real constituents of the representative body a disgust against the system of government, and urging them to clamour for changes far too important to be so dictated, a rash fanatic, uniting enthusiasm with obstinacy and unlimited impudence, produced all the mischievous effects of madness combined with wickedness. By his influence over the lower order of people, he was enabled to silence and disperse the legislature, paralyze the civil arm, and deliver up the metropolis, for several successive days, to the alarm of pillage, the horrors of conflagration, and the devastations of unbridled ferocity.

Growth of fanaticism in Scotland.

The repeal or modification of the act of the tenth and eleventh of Willim III, for preventing the growth of popery, was the means of adding the fury of religious bigotry to the rage of political discussion, and of engendering a dark and diabolical fanaticism, which disgraced and disturbed the kingdom. The benefits granted to Roman Catholics by the repealing act* did not extend to Scotland; but as a loyal declaration of the people of that persuasion was supposed to have considerably influenced government in affording relief to those in England, and as their peaceable and orderly behaviour, on every occasion, rendered them unexceptionable objects of legislative benevolence, measures were commenced for procuring, in their behalf, some relaxation of a system of law uncommonly severe, and frequently, even in modern times, enforced to the very extreme of rigour. Their claims being

Proposal to relieve the Catholics.

* The benefits procured to Papists by this repeal were, an exemption of bishops, priests, and instructors of youth from prosecution and imprisonment, a security of the rights of inheritance, and permission to purchase lands in fee simple; but the Roman Catholics were not to enjoy these privileges, except on condition of taking the oaths of allegiance, of renunciation of the Stuart family; an abjuration of the positions that it is lawful to murder heretics, and that no faith should be kept with them; and of that principle which legalizes the deposition, or murder, of princes excommunicated by the Pope. Thy were also on oath to deny the Pope's authority, temporal or civil, within this realm.

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well founded, rational, and moderately solicited, produced at first no uneasiness; the general assembly of the church of Scotland seemed influenced by the prevailing spirit of liberality, and rejected, by a large majority, a proposal to remonstrate against the bill which was passing through the British Parliament; but the gloomy rancour of fanaticism marked the opportunity, and soon found means to single out victims for popular rage. A scurrilous pamphlet was produced by a nonjuring clergyman in Edinburgh, exciting the public animosity against the Roman Catholics, published at the expense of a society (to judge by this proceeding, grossly misnamed) for propagating Christian knowledge, and circulated with industry and profusion among all ranks. No people on earth have a more zealous and honest regard for the interest of their church establishment than the Scots; but the same fervour of spirit which, when well directed, had enabled them to disregard persecution, and to triumph over religious tyranny, was now perverted to wicked purposes, and rendered, among the lower class, a motive for the commission of shameful crimes and outrages. The newspapers, those ready vehicles of slander, intemperance, and sedition, were filled with recapitulations and abstracts of the laws against papists and popery, at once reminding the people of their great power over a part of the community, and recalling to memory the historical reasons on which the grant of that power, now useless and oppressive, had been founded. The more ardent of the preachers appealed to the passions of their hearers by incendiary declamations, and the synod of Glasgow adopted resolutions for opposing any bill which might be brought into Parliament in favour of the Roman Catholics of Scotland.

October. Efforts of fanatics.

November. Formation of Protestant associations.

These resolutions were followed by several other synods; but that of Lothian and Tweeddale, which met in Edinburgh, and from which great results were expected, refused to sanction any measure for impeding the humane intentions of government in relieving their innocent fellow-subjects. This laudable moderation

afforded to some zealots of Edinburgh an opportunity of raising the cry that the Protestant religion was abandoned; and about a dozen tradesmen, clerks, and apprentices, erected themselves into a "committee for "the Protestant interest." They published in newspapers their resolutions to oppose the bill for relief of Papists, invited general correspondence, and, through the medium of the press, endeavoured to inflame the populace against the objects of their jealously. Correspondence with this new committee was speedily opened, and resolutions of boroughs, parishes, and private societies, together with inflammatory pamphlets, and scurrilous libels, were daily published, and circulated in every form and in every direction.

1779. January. Riots in Edinburgh.

The Roman Catholics, seeing the peril in which their first attempt had involved them, in vain endeavoured to retreat from the gathering storm, and regain their former tranquil, though insecure condition. In a letter to Lord North, which was published in the London newspapers, they declined the intended application to Parliament, choosing rather to sacrifice their own advantages than endanger the peace of their country; but the populace of Edinburgh, long instigated by every art in the power of misguided or designing individuals, had already prepared to execute summary vengeance on men whom they considered the enemies of their faith. An incendiary hand-bill was scattered about the city, inviting those who should find it, to meet at the Leith Wynd, on an appointed evening, to pull down *the pillar of popery*, lately erected: such was the denomination given to a suite of rooms, occupied by a Romish priest, one of which was set apart for the attendance of his congregation*. This daring invitation was not issued till the popular mind was sufficiently prepared; already were the individuals

29th January.

* This letter, curious in its style and in its injunctions, was in these words: "Men and brethren; whoever shall find this letter, will take it as a warning to "meet at Leith Wynd, on Wednesday next, in the evening, to pull down that pillar "of popery lately erected there.—A. PROTESTANT. P.S. Please to read this "carefully, keep it clean, and drop it somewhere else. For King and country, "UNITY." It was superscribed, "To every Protestant into whose hands this letter "shall come, greeting."

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of the persecuted persuasion kept in constant terror, afraid to remain in their houses, and even hunted through the streets with derisive shouts, and threatening exclamations. A numerous rabble effectually completed the recommended destruction, extending their fury to another house of popish worship, and burning or purloining a valuable library belonging to the priest; the dwellings thus demolished were known to be inhabited by various other families of tradesmen and mechanics. The mob, unimpeded in their career, continued several days destroying the houses and furniture of real or reputed Papists, insulting their persons, and threatening their lives. Gathering courage from impunity, they extended their views, and denounced vengeance against all who had favoured sentiments of toleration: in this number were included Dr. Robertson, the justly celebrated historian, who in his writings had recommended general benevolence in matters of opinion; and Mr. Crosbie, the advocate, whose only imputed crime was that of professionally drawing up the bill intended for Parliament.

Reprehensible conduct of the magistracy.

During such scenes, the inactivity of the civil power, if sufficiently strong in itself, or adequately reinforced by extraneous assistance, would have seemed highly censurable; but the Provost of Edinburgh was more than inactive; his conduct was an indirect sanction, if not an incentive, to a rabble, who, being without order and without partizans of any consequence, would have shrunk back from the first combined or regular resistance. Their intentions were manifested, not only by the hand-bills strewed in the streets, but by several minor acts of outrage before the grand attack; yet, on a formal application, the Provost only promised to convoke the deacons of the corporation, and caution them to use their influence in dissuading the people from joining in the intended tumult; and when a lieutenant of the navy, commanding a press-gang, offered to quell the riot, he was commanded by the Provost to quit Edinburgh. The city guard was no more alert than the chief magistrate in repressing these criminal excesses; and when the military, under the Duke of

Buccleugh, generously offered to preserve the peace, they were not only prevented from interfering, but the prisoners, whom they took in the very act of burning a house, were discharged by the Provost, and permitted to rejoin their fellow-criminals. Terror at length effected what a sense of public duty had failed in producing, and the magistrates claimed military assistance, by which the tumult was speedily quelled. The Provost and his colleagues filled up the measure of their absurdities by a ridiculous proclamation, in which, from a desire to "remove the fears and apprehensions which "had distressed the minds of many well-meaning people "in the metropolis, with regard to the repeal of the "penal statutes against Papists, the magistrates in-"formed them, and the public in general, that the bill "for that purpose was totally laid aside: it was there-"fore expected that such (*i. e.* well-meaning) persons "would carefully avoid connecting themselves with "any tumultuous assembly for the futnre." They promised to take the most vigorous measures for repressing tumults and riots which might afterward arise; "being satisfied that *future* disorders could "proceed only from the wicked views of bad and "designing men." This acknowledgment of their past neglect, and appearance of coincidence in sentiment with the rioters, was at once an insult to the sufferers, and a triumph to the mob. The miserable victims of persecution remained unsupported, no attempt was made to redress their grievances, they were still afraid to appear publicly, and their subsistence was chiefly derived from the clandestine bounty of their friends.

6th February.

Edinburgh furnished an example sufficiently inviting to the fanatics of Glasgow, although the objects of persecution were so few, that they had not a chapel, or even a priest. The chief fury of the populace fell on the house and works of Mr. Bagnal, a gentleman from Staffordshire, who had established in the vicinity a manufactory for the pottery distinguished by the name of his own county. His property was utterly destroyed, and his wife and family, after many indig-

9th February. Riots at Glasgow.

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nities, compelled to seek refuge in the city, their neighbours being afraid to shelter them. The magistrates and clergy, however, without delay, repaired the depredations of the mob, by bountifully relieving the exigencies of the sufferers, and liberally refunding Mr. Bagnal's whole loss*.

15th March. Discussed in Parliament.

These violences could not escape the attention of Parliament. On the first appearance of the Lord Advocate, Mr. Dundas, in the House of Commons, after the riots, he was interrogated by Mr. Wilkes respecting the completion of a promise, made the last session, to bring in a bill for the relief of his Catholic countrymen. With his usual frankness, the Lord Advocate stated, that, from the violences and insurrections in all parts of Scotland, it had been agreed, between him and the principal people of that persuasion, to defer measures of relief, till subsiding prejudice should leave room for the operation of cool persuasion. Mr. Wilkes made an animated reply, decrying the sacrifice of the dignity of Parliament to the seditious populace of Scotland. London, he said, might, after the example of Glasgow and Edinburgh, prevent, by insurrection, any matter, however important, from being brought into Parliament. He animadverted on the magistrates, their apology for the rabble, and their promise for concession, and did not hesitate to pronounce, that when the Catholics could not find protection for their lives and properties even in the capital, there was a dissolution of all government.

18th March.

Mr. Burke introduced a further discussion on the subject, by presenting a petition from the injured parties for compensation and further security. Mr. Fox, in supporting the prayer, said, the honour and humanity of the House ought not to be limited to compensation, but they should repeal the penal laws, undeterred by petty insurrections in a little corner of the empire. Unwilling to urge extremities, Lord North suspended

* Taken principally from Considerations on the State of the Roman Catholics in Scotland: A Memorial to the Public in behalf of the Catholics in Edinburgh and Glasgow, containing an account of the riot against them in February 1779; and Fanaticism and Treason, or a History of the Rebellious Insurrections in June 1780, first edition.

the consideration of the petition, by the previous question; declaring that voluntary compensation would be made, which was more eligible than compulsory.

Such proceedings, both in England and Scotland, could not be expected to repress the active genius of fanaticism once let loose; politics mingled in the question, and eighty-five corresponding societies, similarly formed with that of Edinburgh, were speedily erected under the pretext of protecting the protestant religion. Lord George Gordon, a wild, enthusiastic, moody fanatic, was elected their president: he replied to Mr. Fox's suggestions in the late debate, by declaring it highly inexpedient to tolerate the Catholics of Scotland, equally with those of England or Ireland; and, before the end of the session, moved, but his motion was not seconded, that the popish petition presented by Mr. Burke should "be thrown over the table." In his speech, he daringly asserted that the whole people of Scotland, fit to bear arms, except a few Roman Catholics, were ripe for insurrection and rebellion, and had invited him to be their leader or privy counsellor. It was not in the power of Parliament, consistently with the act of union, to alter the religious law of Scotland; the natives were impressed with that opinion, and would perish in arms, or prevail in the contest.

Corresponding committees formed;

and Lord George Gordon elected president.

5th May.

Although the active spirit of fanaticism had long subsided in England, means were not wanting to give birth and vigour to a combination, in which politics and religion might be united to produce formidable commotions. Meetings of men desirous, either from the necessity of professional pursuit, the hope of adventitious advantage, or the solicitations of personal vanity, to excel in the arts of oratory, had long been established in the metropolis: they had hitherto been considered always harmless, sometimes useful, often ridiculous; they had been satirized from the press, and on the stage; but ridicule alone was employed against them. The modern rage of discussion brought them into more conspicuous notice; they were resorted to by men of lively talents, though of confined information; public measures were debated before large au-

Effects of debating societies.

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diences; and, as little delicacy was preserved in mentioning the names, or alluding to the conduct of exalted personages, all who found pleasure in gross abuse and harsh raillery, occasionally intermingled with wit, and sometimes presenting a scanty portion of information, frequented these assemblies, which were termed debating societies. Religious topics were sometimes debated on ordinary days, and separate societies were established for the discussion of them on Sundays. By means of these clubs, Lord George Gordon formed a "Protestant Association" in England, of which, as in Scotland, he was declared President. That a man of his birth and station should condescend to court such an assemblage, and afford them his countenance and protection, was to them a subject of pride and individual gratification. His family was highly honourable; he was a member of the British Parliament; and although his absurd speeches frequently thinned the House, still they often displayed ability and no inconsiderable portion of coarse sarcastic wit. Opposition treated him with complacency, and something very like encouragement; distinguished leaders termed him their honourable friend, supported his arguments, and justified his conduct.

Intemperance of Lord George Gordon. 25th Nov.

His success in forming these associations augmented, what appeared to want no increase, his violence and gross buffoonery. On the first day of the session, while dilating in most unwarrantable terms on the disposition of the people of Great Britain and Ireland, he said the indulgences granted to Papists had alarmed all Scotland, where the people were determined to guard against a sect in such favour with the ministry: nor were these sentiments confined to himself; government should find a hundred and twenty thousand men at his back, who would avow and support them, and whose warmth of spirit was still greater than his own. They had sent petitions to the ministers who had disregarded, to the Lord Chancellor who had suppressed, and to the Speaker who had incurred displeasure by not delivering them to the House of Commons. They had now printed their sentiments

and resolutions, which he was to deliver to the King and the Prince of Wales, for their instruction on the manner in which the Scots would consent to be governed. The people of Scotland were irritated and exasperated, being convinced that the King was a Papist. 1779.

The indifference with which these attacks were endured, probably arose, partly from respect to the family of this intemperate man, and partly from a notion that he was not free from insanity. During the whole session he continued the same course of ribaldry, constantly boasting of the number of men attached to his person and subjected to his will, calumniating the King, and defying Parliament. In a debate on Mr. Burke's reform bill, after fatiguing the House with a series of absurdities, he asserted that he had in Scotland a hundred and sixty thousand men at his command; and if the King did not keep his coronation oath, they would do more than abridge his revenue, they would cut off his head. 1780. 8th March.

It would be much beneath the dignity of history to record the excesses of so coarse a fanatic, but for the fatal consequences with which they were attended*. A petition had already been presented to the House of Commons, signed by nearly three thousand inhabitants of Rochester, and another from Maidstone, praying a repeal of the act allowing indulgences to Catholics; when Lord George Gordon thought proper, by public advertisement, as president of the Protestant association, to invite a similar petition from the inhabitants of London and its environs. "If they united," he told them, "as one man, for the honour of God "and liberties of the people, the kingdom might yet "experience the blessing of divine Providence, and "the restoration of love and confidence among brethren. "But if they continued obstinate in error, and spread "idolatry and corruption through the land, nothing

Petitions to Parliament against the Catholics. 11th April. 1st May. 9th May. London petition.

* Numerous instances of his violence and ribaldry are not here commemorated; they may be found in the debates from 1778 to 1780, or a copious collection of them in the Political Magazine for June 1780, which contains the greatest details of the violent transactions of that month.

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"could be expected but division among the people, dis-
"traction in the senate, and discontent in the camp,
"with all other calamities attendant on those nations
"whom God had delivered over to arbitrary power and
"despotism." He gave notice in Parliament of the day when this petition would be presented, and of his design to require the attendance of all petitioners, in an humble, decent, and respectful manner.

29th. Meeting at Coachmakers' Hall.

For the purpose of collecting an increased number of signatures, the petition was deposited at his house, and, by another advertisement, he called a meeting of the Protestant association at Coachmakers' Hall, one of the most celebrated rooms where debating societies were held. At this place he made a long harangue to a large assembly on the repeal of the act against Catholics, and the rapidity with which it had passed through Parliament, decrying the measure as repugnant to the principles of the revolution, and dangerous to the succession of the House of Hanover. To inflame still further the minds of his auditors, he read the catechism of the church of Rome, and an indulgence granted by the Pope to his flock in England. The alarming growth of popery, he said, could only be resisted and quashed by going, in a firm, manly, and determined manner, to the House of Commons, and displaying to their representatives their resolution to preserve their religious freedom with their lives. "For his part, he would "run all hazards with the people: and if the people "were too lukewarm to run all hazards with him, "when their conscience and their country called them "forth, they might get another president; he was not "a lukewarm man; and if they meant to spend their "time in mock debate and idle opposition, they might "get another leader." Loud acclamations followed this "incendiary speech, attended by a resolution that the whole body of the Protestant association would assemble in St. George's Fields, on the second of June, with blue cockades in their hats, to distinguish real Protestants and friends of the petition from their enemies. The president declared that if the assemblage amounted to less than twenty thousand, he would

not deliver the petition; a meeting of forty thousand was anticipated, and the advertisement of resolutions assigned that as a reason for convening this petitioning army in St. George's Fields.

2nd June. Meeting of the petitioners in St. George's Fields.

On the day appointed, not twenty thousand only, but sixty, and some accounts extend them to a hundred thousand, petitioners or associators, met in the appointed place. They were marshalled in separate bands, and, after an harangue from Lord George, the main body made an unnecessary circuit over London Bridge, and through the city, to the seat of Parliament. They marched six a-breast, preceded by a man carrying on his head the petition, signed with a hundred and twenty thousand names or marks.

Motion by the Duke of Richmond for a reform of Parliament.

On this inauspicious and disgraceful day, the Duke of Richmond introduced to the Lords a project for reforming the lower House of Parliament. He harangued, in hacknied style, on the abuses of government, the influence of ministers, the secret invisible power which directed the whole political machine, and the just complaints and pretensions of the people. His plan was to dissolve Parliaments annually, abolish burgage tenures, and admit to a right of suffrage every *man* of full age, and not disqualified by law.

The members of Parliament insulted.

This wild scheme of popular reform met with a practical rebuke in the moment of its projection. Before the sitting of the House, the mob, occupying all the passes to Palace Yard, rendered the approach difficult even to their favourites; but those who had not acquired that disgraceful distinction were robbed, beaten, and even threatened with the loss of their lives. The populace were prevented from rushing into the House by the activity and resolution of the doorkeepers alone: several peers exhibited, on their entrance, incontestible proofs of the indignities they had sustained, and stated to the chair the danger of other members, while the Duke of Richmond, in the genuine zeal of reform, complained of interruption, and seemed to consider his speech of more importance than the lives of Lord Boston and the Bishop of Lincoln, who were at that moment declared to be in the hands of the

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rabble*. In this ridiculous spirit of procrastination and factious delay, a generous proposal by Lord Townshend for the House to issue forth in a body and rescue Lord Boston, was converted into a debate, whether the speaker should attend with the mace, which was only terminated by the appearance of Lord Boston, whose life might have been sacrificed to popular rage before assistance was obtained through so tardy a medium. One of the Middlesex magistrates was called to the bar, who declared that every exertion could only procure the attendance of six constables, and that no civil force could quell so large and tumultuous a mob. A suggestion of the propriety of calling in the military, under the authority of the civil power, was resisted by Lord Shelburne, who declared, though ministers might be fond of such a measure, it should never meet with his sanction. The original debate was interrupted; the peers separately retired, leaving, at last, Lord Mansfield, who had shewn, throughout the day, the utmost presence of mind, with no other protection than the officers of the house and his own servants.

The petitioners insult and interrupt the House of Commons.

The House of Commons exhibited a scene equally disgraceful. Many of the members were no less ill-treated than the Lords. The rabble took possession of the lobby, making the House resound with cries of "No popery," and knocking violently at the door: and when their power and the absence of all resistance are considered, it is not easy to say what prevented them from rushing in. The motions for bringing up and entering into the immediate consideration of the petition, were made by Lord George Gordon, and seconded by Alderman Bull: the former was granted of course, the latter being amended by a delay of four days, the House divided, and only nine members were found sufficiently flexible to consent to a deliberation,

* The rage against the Bishop of Lincoln had no other foundation than his being brother to the Lord Chancellor (Thurlow); Lord Boston was attacked on an untrue and wicked suggestion, that he was a member of the Romish church. Lord Boston effected his own liberation: the bishop, after sustaining much insult and violence, was rescued by a young law student, received into a private house, and concealed in the attire of a woman from the populace (who swore they would cut the sign of the cross on his forehead); several other peers were maltreated.

under the control of an outrageous mob*. During the debate preceding the division, Lord George Gordon frequently went into the lobby, harangued his noisy troop, and encouraged them to perseverance, by expressing hopes that the alarm would compel the King to give directions to his ministers for granting the prayer of their petition. He represented, or, to speak more correctly, misrepresented, what was said by the members, which being observed by Colonel Holroyd, he took hold of Lord George Gordon when he returned into the House, and said, "He had heretofore "imputed his conduct to madness, but now found it "more characterized by malice; and if he repeated such "proceedings, he should immediately move for his "commitment to Newgate." Lord George, with great mildness and puritanical cant, "lamented that a "person for whom he had so much respect should "consider him in that light." He desisted from going out at the door, but afterwards went up stairs and spoke to the people in the lobby from a kind of gallery. General Conway intimated a determination to resist any attempt to intrude into the House; and a member† declared, that, on the bursting in of the first man, his sword should pass through Lord George, and not through the rioter.

The House continued in this extraordinary state until about nine o'clock, when the Serjeant-at-Arms having communicated to the Speaker that a detachment of soldiers was drawn up in the Court of Requests, and the passages cleared, the House adjourned. Mr. Addington, an active Middlesex magistrate, appearing with a party of light horse, prevailed on part of the mob to retire. Parties of them, however, filed off in different directions, and burnt and plundered the chapels of the Sardinian and Bavarian ambassadors; some were apprehended and committed to Newgate.

Chapels of ambassadors burnt.

* Their names were, Lord George Gordon and Alderman Bull, tellers; Earl Verney, Sir Philip Jennings Clerke, Sir Michael le Fleming, Sir James Lowther, Sir Joseph Mawbey, Mr. Polhill, and Mr. Tollemache. On the other side were 192.

† Said by some to be Colonel Murray, by others Colonel Gordon; both were relations of Lord George.

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Riots subside. 3rd June.

The early part of the ensuing day exhibiting no appearances of a renewal of the late outrages, Parliament met without interruption. Lord Bathurst moved an address for "prosecuting the authors, abettors, and "instruments of yesterday's outrages;" while the Duke of Richmond imputed the whole blame to the ministry, who, although timely apprized of the meeting, took no measures for preventing its pernicious effects. He had passed through the mob in his way to the House with little interruption; he heard no complaint against any law, but the Quebec act, and he thought that complaint not ill-founded. Lord Shelburne drew a distinction between toleration and establishment, intimating that more than toleration had been obtained for the Catholics. Lord Bathurst's motion was agreed to, and the House having prosecuted, without interruption, a long debate on some dispatches lately received from Admiral Rodney, adjourned till the sixth.

They are renewed.

Contrary to all expectation, the riots were renewed in the evening; a party assembled in Moorfields, and did some mischief under the very eye of Kennet, the Lord Mayor, a weak and ignorant man, totally void of spirit or mental resource, who, with the slightest exertion, might have crushed the tumult in its infancy*.

4th June.

During the ensuing day, which was Sunday, their outrages were confined to Moorfields and its vicinity; and the military, although called out, were not permitted to fire. The real damage was hitherto less considerable than the alarm, and government laboured under the mistake that the proceedings of the rabble portended nothing serious, but were mere irregularities†.

5th. Privy council held.

Before the drawing-room at St. James's in compliment to his Majesty's birth-day, a privy council was held; but the tumults yet appearing of small importance, the only measure adopted was a proclamation, offering a reward of five hundred pounds for the dis-

Proclamation.

* See Wilkes's speech in the House of Commons, 19th June, 1780.

† Such was the opinion expressed by Lord Mansfield to Mr. Strahan. See Boswell's Life of Johnson, vol. iii. p. 457, 8vo.

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covery of those who were concerned in destroying the chapels of the ambassadors. In the course of this day, however, the riots assumed a more formidable aspect, extending beyond the chapels of the obnoxious persuasion, and indicating a wild, ungovernable, and determined fury. The dawn was ushered in by an assault on Sir George Savile's house in Leicester-fields: he had moved the repeal of the statute of William, and his patriotic exertions and parliamentary renown could not avert the fury of the mob, who demolished part of his dwelling, and burnt his furniture before the door. Mr. Rainsforth and Mr. Maberly, two respectable men of business, who had made themselves conspicuous by laudable exertions in apprehending the rioters, were, for that reason, singled out as victims, and their houses destroyed. In Wapping and East Smithfield, Romish chapels were rased, and the wrecks, being brought in parade before Lord George Gordon's house, were burnt in the adjacent fields.

Riots more alarming.

This mischievous fanatic was now alarmed at the effects of his own imprudence, and put forth a hand-bill, in the name of the Protestant association, disavowing the riots. When the House met according to adjournment, he found some members determined to check his extravagancies. Colonel Herbert, afterward Earl of Carnarvon, called across the House, peremptorily commanding him to take from his hat the badge of sedition, the blue cockade, and threatening, if he refused, to do it himself: Lord George tamely obeyed, and put the cockade in his pocket. Although the approaches to the Houses of Parliament were, as before, obstructed by the mob, no member was injured in his passage, but Lord Sandwich, who was wounded, and his carriage destroyed. The House of Lords, without attempting any discussion, adjourned to the nineteenth: and the House of Commons passed resolutions vindicating their own privileges, and an address for repairing the injuries done to the property of ambassadors, and prosecuting, by the Attorney-General, those who had occasioned or abetted the disturbances. Some members of opposition seemed sensible of the

Terror of Lord George Gordon.

6th.

Adjournment of Parliament.

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dreadful emergency to which the country was reduced, and disposed to strengthen government. Mr. Burke, who was implicated in the odium of having favoured Roman Catholics, recommended unanimity and defensive associations; and Sir George Savile thanked the ministry for the assistance of the military in protecting his dwelling. Mr. Fox, however, refused his support to government, alleging that administration had dissolved every bond of society, and disgraced all who acted with them; and an intimation that it would be proper to expel Lord George Gordon, was received with marks of disapprobation. A concession was made to the rabble, which, if founded in prudence, was deficient in dignity, by a resolution, "That, as "soon as the tumults subsided, the House would pro- "ceed to the consideration of the petitions of his Ma- "jesty's Protestant subjects."

Excessive fury of the rioters.

This second collection of the mob gave new force to disorder, as the former slight attempts to restrain the rioters only served to make magistracy ridiculous, and impart to guilt the hardihood arising from impunity. While the Houses were sitting, the minister's abode in Downing Street was attacked, but protected by the military. The insurgents, no longer undetermined in their purpose, or deficient in advisers, were marshalled in bands, and sent on distinct expeditions, which, during two days, were executed with rapidity and success, spreading universal alarm, and threatening general devastation. Religion was now hardly a pretence, although the inhabitants of the metropolis and its vicinity were obliged, as a protection to their property, to chalk on their dwellings the words "no "popery," and to pay, without resistance, the irregular contributions demanded by the rioters, which were levied according to their caprice or rapacity. It were a vain and useless task to pursue methodically the train of waste and havock, and trace with precision the mischief committed by this licentious rabble during their two days' dominion. The prisons of Newgate and Clerkenwell, the Compters, the Fleet, the King's Bench, and the Marshalsea, and the gaols of South-

6th and 7th. Numerous conflagrations.

wark, were emptied of their felons and debtors, and destroyed or greatly damaged*. The houses of Sir John Fielding, Mr. Hyde, and Mr. Cox, magistrates of Middlesex, were plundered and burnt; the dwelling of the Lord Chancellor was saved by posting in it a few soldiers; but the abode of Lord Mansfield met a different fate: furniture, books, and pictures, and, what was a still more irreparable loss, his manuscripts, formed during so long and active a jurisprudential and political life, all were sacrificed to the brute rage of the rabble. The venerable Chief-Justice escaped by a back way, and, wrapt in a cloak, arrived at the door of a friend, requesting admittance. His wine and liquors were poured out in profusion; and probably the hope of similar plunder, more than the circumstance of their being Roman Catholics, drew the attention of the mob to two houses of the Langdales, distillers in Holborn, which were burnt, with several neighbouring buildings. At these places, the rioters drank such quantities of spirituous liquors, that many were burnt and many overwhelmed in ruins.

Timidity of government.

A reluctance, rather inexcusable than unaccountable, had enervated the arm of government, and prevented the due employment of the military during the progress of these disgraceful transactions. A general supineness seemed to pervade every department; no specific orders were issued, and, without them, no justice of the peace would venture to exercise the authorities confided to him by the riot act. The transactions of 1768, when a Surrey magistrate was tried on a capital indictment for such an exertion, and those who obeyed his order were prosecuted with all the malignity of party, were not yet forgotten, nor could the ministers dismiss from their ears those fulminations which had so recently sounded in Parliament, when they merely appointed a military guard, at a time when a mob was brought to their own doors, during the discussion of the popular petitions. The

* The assault of Newgate, without arms, was the most desperate attempt that could be conceived. A building so strong, that, had a dozen men resisted, it seemed almost impossible to take it without artillery.

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rage of opposition, and violence of invective which had prevailed during the whole session, and the many attempts which were daily making to render the people active and efficient in government, account, but do not apologize, for the timidity of administration*.

7th. Second privy-council.

In this emergency, a privy-council was convened, at which, not cabinet ministers alone, but all who had a seat were desired to attend: the King himself was present: irresolution still prevailed; nor was any thing decisive or effectual suggested. The council had risen, when the King anxiously demanded if no measure could be recommended. The Attorney-General answered he knew but of one—that of declaring the tumult rebellious, and authorizing the military to act where necessity required, although the magistrates should not attend. The King desired him to make out the order, which he did at the table on one knee, the King signed it with his own hand; a proclamation was drawn up, and orders from the Adjutant-General's office issued accordingly†. It was confidently pronounced that this order would immediately put an end to the riots. The proclamation did not issue till the evening; but the public soon experienced its good effects. Orders had been sent in various directions for troops to protect the metropolis; a part of the Northumberland militia, which had marched twenty-five miles during the day, reached Lincoln's Inn just as it

7th June.

became night. The conflagrations at Langale's, and at Holborn Bridge, were tremendous, and appeared to spread with alarming rapidity‡. A detachment went immediately, under the command of Colonel Holroyd,

* Lord Chatham, for the preservation of the country, committed two acts which he considered illegal: he arrested a suspicious foreigner by a general warrant, and he laid an embargo on vessels laden with corn; his vindication of his conduct was a lesson, and ought to be a model to ministers: "I know the illegality," he said, "but I exercised power for the salvation of the country, at the risk of my "life; and, were my life to be the certain forfeit, I would again, in similar cir- "cumstances, act the same part."

† From private information. See the proclamation and order, Annual Register, 1780, p. 265, 266.

‡ The night was uncommonly serene and fine, a perfect calm, otherwise the conflagration must have spread over the close parts of the town, especially as the firemen were sometimes prevented from working their engines, and sometimes joined in the pillage themselves.

to those places, and were the first to put a stop to the outrages of the mob; but not before several were killed in the act of breaking into and firing the houses*. The guards soon dispersed the rioters at Blackfriars Bridge, and several were pushed over the balustrades into the Thames.

The resolution to use force was adopted only in time to avert the national ruin. The mob had formed the design of attacking the Bank, and cutting off the pipes by which the town is supplied with water; but, fortunately, too late for execution. The military took possession of every avenue to the Bank, which was also barricaded and strongly guarded; the populace made two attempts in different quarters, but were easily repulsed, and could not be rallied: feeble and hesitative shouts subsided into distant murmurs; and, after a short space, into total silence. The regular firing of the soldiery produced a tremendous effect, and the mob, attentive to their own safety, and employed in removing their wounded associates, fled, regardless of the orders of their leaders. Similar success attended similar exertions in other quarters; and those who at night had been terrified by the shouts of an unnumbered populace, and distracted with the portentous gleam of six-and-thirty separate conflagrations, saw in the morning no vestiges of alarm, but smoking ruins, marks of shot, and traces of blood, designating the route of the wounded fugitives†.

The riots quelled.

8th. Restoration of tranquillity.

The House of Commons met the next day, but

* It was said there had been little combination or plan in the proceedings of the mob, yet a standard-bearer on horseback in their rear was shot, and the body and standard conveyed away in a hackney-coach; and another standard, under a small escort, was met by the detachment on its way to Holborn.

† The return made to Lord Amherst, on the occasion, was

Killed—By association troops and guards	109
By light horse	101
Died in hospitals	75
	285
Under cure in hospitals	173
	458

This account is undoubtedly defective, as many dead and wounded were removed by their friends; and it is impossible to calculate how many were suffocated with spirituous liquors, and smothered in ruins.

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declined proceeding to business, under the notion that the metropolis was subjected to martial law, and, therefore, adjourned to the day appointed by the Upper House. The impression which this supposition was calculated to produce, was removed by the publication of a hand-bill, expressly denying it: business soon fell into its accustomed course; the courts of law, which, on the first day of the term, had been opened merely *pro forma*, resumed their sittings, and alarm soon softened into mere measures of caution and preparations for defence against the repetition of outrages. The soldiers ordered from the country effected their march with zealous precipitation; the inhabitants of every place at which they halted, testified, by hospitable solicitude, a due sense of the importance of their services: they were disposed in camps in the parks, in the Museum gardens, and Lincoln's Inn gardens. Volunteer associations for the protection of liberty and property were formed, and supported with great spirit; and the temporary absence of government and security seemed to enhance their value, and inspire unusual zeal for their preservation.

9th. Lord George Gordon committed to the Tower.

On the second day after these outrageous transactions, Lord George Gordon was apprehended by virtue of an order from the Secretary of State, and committed to the Tower, on a charge of high treason. In his examination before the privy council, he shewed great feebleness, and seemed surprised at the results of his own folly. He was escorted to his place of confinement by a numerous guard; but his discomfited adherents, intent on concealment from the pursuit of offended justice, and sensible of their own weakness, did not attempt his rescue*.

Spirited behaviour of Wilkes.

Mr. Wilkes, whose name is so inseparably connected with the history of the reign as to render his

* For this account, besides the periodical publications, in many of which the facts are very accurately related, I have consulted a plain and succinct narrative of the late riots, published under the name of William Vincent, but written by Thomas Holcroft; Fanaticism and Treason, by Herbert Croft; Considerations on the late Disturbances, by a consistent Whig; the State and Behaviour of the English Catholics; and several other pamphlets; the Trial of Lord George Gordon, and the trials of the different rioters; and have received considerable private information.

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conduct, on such an occasion, worthy of regard, behaved, during these transactions, with the intrepidity and judgment becoming a magistrate of the metropolis. At the height of the tumults, the publisher of a seditious periodical work advertised a new paper, recommending the people to "persevere in resisting the "infernal designs of the ministry, designed to over- "turn the religion and civil liberties of the country, "and introduce popery and slavery." Mr. Wilkes caused this miscreant to be apprehended, and assisted the military in resisting the inroads of lawless violence.

6th June.

At the adjourned meeting of Parliament, the King, in a short speech from the throne, recapitulated the measures he had adopted, and submitted to each house copies of the proclamations. All parties concurred in approving his Majesty's conduct; the only differences in opinion arose from reflections on the ministry, for not sooner protecting the metropolis by the armed force, and a discussion on the legality of military interference. This important topic was accurately illustrated by Lord Mansfield, whose opinion has ever since been regarded as constitutional law. He disembarrassed the question from all doubts relative to constructive treason, by proving that the late riots amounted to direct acts of high treason. But, beside these, the insurgents were guilty of felony, by burning private property, demolishing and robbing houses, and other acts of undisguised violence. This was the true ground of the proclamation for calling out the military. Every man might, and, if required by a magistrate, must, interfere to suppress a riot; much more to prevent acts of felony, treason, and rebellion. What an individual might do, was lawful to any number of persons assembled for a lawful purpose; it would be needless to prove that magistrates might legally act in a manner not forbidden to other subjects; constables were particularly charged to apprehend persons engaged in breaches of the peace, felony, or treason, and in case of resistance, to attack, wound, and even kill those who continued to oppose them. A private man, seeing another commit an unlawful act, might apprehend, and

19th. King's speech to Parliament.

Lord Mansfield's opinion on military interference.

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by force compel his submission, not to the assailant, but to the law; and so might any number of men, assembled or called together for the purpose. This doctrine the chief justice stated to be clear and indisputable, with all its possible consequences, and it was the true foundation for calling in the military to quell the late riots. The persons so assisting were, in legal contemplation, mere private individuals, amenable to the law; and a man wearing a red coat was not less liable to be called on for assistance than any other person. If a military man exceeded the powers with which he was invested, he must be tried and punished, not by the martial code, but by the common and statute laws of the realm. Consequently, the idea that the metropolis was under martial law, and that the military had more power since the riots than they had before, was an idle and ill-founded apprehension.

The sentiments of Lord Mansfield, on so important a topic, claimed the utmost attention, and the consideration of his years and sufferings in the late unhappy tumults, added to the interest with which he was regarded. In prefacing his opinion, he avowed that he had formed it without having recourse to books, adding the pathetic exclamation, *indeed I have no books to consult:* all his auditors seemed impressed with the sincerest sympathy, and to deplore the loss he had sustained as a national misfortune and disgrace. Opinions similar to those of Lord Mansfield were expressed by the Lord Chancellor and other peers, on occasion of two captious and querulous motions by the Duke of Richmond, on the disarming, as he termed it, of the citizens of London by the Lord Mayor, and for some examination of evidence respecting the progress and suppression of the riots, which were negatived without division.

City petition against the Roman Catholics.

Notwithstanding the prevailing indignation against the late excesses, Alderman Sawbridge brought up a petition from the Common Council against the Roman Catholics, which Mr. Wilkes reprobated, as obtained during the height of the disturbances (7th June) and by surprise, when most of the members had departed,

in the belief that the business of the day was concluded. He reproached the Lord Mayor and Alderman Bull for supineness and factiousness. Had the chief magistrate taken proper care of the city, he said, the tumults would have been suppressed in their origin; and Bull had countenanced the insurgents, by permitting the constables of his ward to wear the ensign of sedition in their hats, and by appearing publicly arm-in-arm with the great instigator of the riots.

Petitions rejected.

The House resolved itself into a committee for considering the petitions against the tolerating act, which were principally enforced by Alderman Bull and Sir Joseph Mawbey. Mr. Burke distinguished himself in favour of toleration, avowing, at the same time, the firmest attachment to the doctrines of the Church of England; and on his motion the House adopted five resolutions, expressive of their satisfaction in the law as it existed, and their abhorrence of the late tumults, as well as the misrepresentations which had given birth to them.

Bill for preventing Catholics from teaching youth: Rejected.

As, in these debates, some apprehensions were expressed relative to the influence which Roman Catholics might acquire by being intrusted with the authorities of tuition, Sir George Savile brought in a bill for depriving them of the right of keeping schools, or receiving youth to board in their houses: it passed the Commons, but was lost in the Lords.

8th July. End of the session.

The King terminated the session with a judicious speech, in the conclusion of which he recommended to the members of the House of Commons to assist, by their influence and authority in their several counties, as they had by their unanimous support in Parliament, in guarding the peace of the kingdom from further disturbances, and watching over the preservation of public safety. "Make my people sensible," he said, "of the happiness they enjoy, and the dis-"tinguished advantages they derive from our excellent "constitution in Church and State. Warn them of "the hazard of innovation; point out to them the "fatal consequences of such commotions as have lately

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" been excited; and let it be your care to impress on " their minds this important truth—that rebellious " insurrections to resist or reform the laws, must end " either in the destruction of the persons who make " the attempt, or in the subversion of our free and " happy constitution."

28th June. Trials of the rioters. 10th July.

The rioters in London and Middlesex were arraigned at the Old Bailey. A special commission was issued for trying those in Surrey. The long depending arrangements with Sir Willian De Grey being completed, Mr. Wedderburne took his seat as Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, being at the same time raised to the peerage by the title of Lord Loughborough. He was the principal commissioner, and delivered a judicious, eloquent, and impressive charge. No harsh or intemperate zeal for vengeance actuated the judges or influenced the juries at either place; although these juries were composed of men whose property was affected by the sums recovered from the counties for reparation of damages, their proceedings were characterised by the humanity of British jurisprudence: no man was convicted but on the fullest testimony; no plea of extenuation or recommendatory circumstance was disregarded; and, considering the extent and duration of the riots, the multitude of persons engaged, and the rewards for giving evidence, the number of convictions was remarkably small: few parallels can be found of national indignation so justly excited, and so easily appeased*. The sheriffs and other jailors were indemnified by Parliament against any actions which might be brought for the escape of prisoners; and the benefits of an act of insolvency were extended to those who, after being set free by the mob, voluntarily surrendered.

Trial of Lord George Gordon.

Lord George Gordon was at first totally disregarded in his confinement; he complained of being prevented from seeing his friends, but had the mortification to hear that no friends had enquired for him. He after-

* At the Old Bailey, 85 were tried; of whom 35 were capitally convicted, 7 convicted of single felony, and 43 acquitted. In Surrey, 50 were tried; of whom 24 were capitally convicted, and 26 acquitted.

ward ineffectually petitioned the House of Commons to obtain his discharge. He was tried for high treason; but, although some doubts prevailed as to the extent of his criminality, he owed his acquittal principally to the extraordinary zeal and talents of his counsel, Mr. Kenyon, and more particularly Mr. Erskine. The societies of Glasgow entered into a subscription, and remitted four hundred and eighty-five pounds for his support. He afterward fell rapidly into general disregard, though he made some desperate attempts to attract notice, by attending at St. James's to offer the declarations and resolutions of his associated rabble to the King, and by publishing a letter on the subject of his reception*.

Jan. 1781.

Such was the final termination of this unhappy and disgraceful event: its character and the reflections to which it gives rise are ably and judiciously detailed by a reverend prelate, who did not long survive the period. "The facts are too recent and too well known," he says, "to be related; and it is to be wished that "they could be blotted out of all history, and out of the "memory of every soul living, that they might be men- "tioned no more to the shame and disgrace of the Bri- "tish name and nation. The papists, dissenters, the "magistrates, the ministry, the parliament, all parties "and persons almost, were to blame; but the opposition "most of all. The Papists, imprudently, took more "liberties than were allowed by the act of Parliament in "their favour. The dissenters manifested a cruel perse- "cution. The magistrates were all confounded and "stupified. We read, in the Roman story, that an "emperor made his horse a consul; and we might as "well have had apes for justices of peace. The minis- "ters should have prevented such an unlawful concourse "of people by a proclamation, or other more vigorous "measures if requisite. The Parliament, instead of "giving way to their fears and adjourning for a time, "should have proceeded immediately to the strongest "acts and resolutions against suchriotous assemblies,

* See Remembrancer, vol. xii. p. 298.

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" for our present peace and future security. The late " act for relief of the Papists," he proceeds, " though " no great matter in itself, was yet made a cry and pre- " tence to work up the people to madness; but the sore " lay much deeper. If that act had been the real " grievance, the rage of the populace would, of course, " have fallen on the promoters of it, Sir George Savile, " who first moved, and Mr. Dunning who seconded it; " Lord Rockingham, Lord Shelburne, Mr. Burke, and " others who supported it; but little or no damage was " done to them, and that little only for a pretence and " colour. The fury of the mob was discharged chiefly " upon the friends of government, and particularly " upon the great and venerable dispenser of law and " justice, who was not even present at any reading of " the bill*. The Protestant associators," he adds, " dis- " grace the Protestant religion by their intolerant prin- " ciples and practices. It is possible, but barely pos- " ble, that some few of them might have no bad inten- " tions at first; but others of no religion, taking advantage " of their mistaken zeal; French and American agents, " and some desperate villains of our own and other " countries, inlisted and inrolled themselves under their " banners for the sake of plunder and destruction. " John the Painter's attempt was only the prelude; " this was the tragedy, and a deep tragedy indeed, such " as never before was acted upon this stage, and God " grant that it may be never again†."

But it was not for such acts as this that the vengeance of the mob was directed against this venerable nobleman; he had long been the object of vituperation and calumny to every faction and every factious

* In administering the law, Lord Mansfield had shewn himself a vigilant guardian of the oppressed, and a determined opposer of all attempts to enforce in an undue manner those statutes which, if carried to their utmost extent, would have been so injurious to the Roman Catholics. A strongly characteristic instance is disclosed in the letter of Father Bedingfield, already noticed, v. ii. p. 557. It may be mentioned here, that the Payne, mentioned in this letter, is described by Mr. Plowden (History, vol. i. p. 461) as " One Pain, a carpenter, who, having two " daughters, little business, much bigotry, and more covetousness, formed the " singular speculation of acquiring £20,000 a piece for his daughters' fortunes, " by informations under the penal statutes against the Catholics."

† Works of the Right Rev. Thomas Newton. D.D. Lord Bishop of Bristol, with some Account of his Life, vol. i. p. 119

declaimer, and his firmness and impartiality in administering justice had inflamed against him a rancour which could never have arisen from mere offences in matter of religion.

In the autumn, Parliament was suddenly dissolved; the elections in some places were conducted with great spirit; in others with remarkable languor. Mr. Fox, after a long contest with Lord Lincoln, was returned for Westminster: Mr. Burke was rejected at Bristol, having lost many friends in consequence of his supporting the trade of Ireland in opposition to the instructions of his constituents, which he wisely and magnanimously disregarded; Malton, which he had formerly represented, again returned him, and the humble borough gained, by such a representative, an honour which the great commercial city might reasonably envy.

1st Sept. Dissolution of Parliament.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-NINTH.

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Admiral Rodney—His situation in France—Generosity of the Maréchal de Biron—Rodney's return—Bounty of the King—State of the naval service—He obtains a command. Admiral Kempenfelt captures French transports.—Rodney sails—Captures a Spanish fleet—Defeats Langara.—Digby takes French ships.—Prince William Henry.—Siege and capture of Charlestown in South Carolina.—Clinton's address—and proclamations.—Formation of military force.—Expeditions against the Americans.—Burford defeated by Tarleton.—Clinton quits Carolina.—Proceedings of Lord Cornwallis.—Exertions of the Americans.—Treachery in South Carolina.—Gates commands the Americans.—Battle of Camden.—Tarleton defeats Sumter.—Severities of Lord Cornwallis.—Colonel Ferguson routed and killed.—Effect of this disaster.—End of the campaign in Carolina.—Transactions at New York.—Incursion into the Jerseys.—Attack on Bergen Point.—Arrival of reinforcements from France. Ineffectual attempt on Rhode Island.—Arrival of Rodney in the West Indies.—Ineffectual efforts and skirmishes.—Arrival of a Spanish fleet.—De Guichen returns to Europe. Rodney to America.—Disappointment of the Americans on the absence of De Guichen.—Defection of Arnold.—Fate of Major André.—Arnold's proclamations.—Burgoyne's army at length exchanged.—Naval transactions in Europe.—Capture of the British East and West India fleets.—Quebec fleet taken by the Americans.

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1780. Admiral Rodney.

GIBRALTAR being reduced to the utmost distress for want of provisions, Admiral Rodney was intrusted with the command of a squadron destined for its relief. The appearance of this illustrious Admiral on

the scene of action was occasioned by one of those extraordinary circumstances which give to some events in history the appearance of romance. He had served his country gloriously in the late war, and had afterward been advantageously employed in Jamaica; but his appointment ceasing, and his income not affording him the means of pursuing the life of fashion and elegance to which he had been used, and to which his inclinations strongly tended, he had contracted debts, and was obliged to seek refuge in France. In Paris he was treated with the respect and kindness which a polite and generous people can shew even to those whom duty has obliged to act against them in a hostile character; but still the inadequacy of his pecuniary resources beset him, and he incurred debts to a considerable amount. When the war broke out, it is said that the French king, through the Maréchal Biron, offered him a high command in his navy, but which he refused, with becoming expressions of the resentment he should have felt, had the proposal originated with the Maréchal himself. The narrative is destitute of confirmation, and wants the appearance of truth. The noble and susceptible individuals who held rank in the French marine would never have endured the intrusion of a foreigner into a station which would render him their superior, while his only means of attaining it must have dishonoured him as a rebel and a traitor. That Rodney would have rejected such an offer if it had been made, cannot be doubted: he was not unacquainted with poverty; but dishonour could never approach him.

His situation in France.

Biron, a truly illustrious and high-spirited nobleman, would have been a very improper agent in such a negotiation; for he admired and loved in Rodney the qualities with which he himself was endowed: he sought his acquaintance, and caused a communication to be made to him, that, as he understood his stay in Paris was occasioned by the want of a remittance to discharge his debts in that capital, he would readily supply him with cash to the amount, if required, of two thousand pounds. With proper expressions of

Generosity of the Maréchal de Biron.

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gratitude, the Admiral declined the offer; but after a lapse of five weeks*, during which his supplies did not arrive, his creditors becoming insolent and threatening, and his personal freedom insecure, he accepted the tender, much pressed and often repeated, of this high-minded and warm-hearted Frenchman, and the aid of a thousand louis-d'or enabled him to quiet his Paris creditors, and return to his own country†.

His return.

Bounty of the King.

He did not at first obtain employment. Admiral Keppel commanded the great Channel fleet, while those destined to America and the West Indies were given to Sir Hyde Parker, Barrington, and Byron; but Rodney's merit was discerned by the King, who honoured him with an audience, received him most graciously, promised him early employment, and at the first opportunity conferred on him the rank of Admiral of the White.

June 20th.

State of the naval service.

Still he remained unemployed more than a year, during which time he had the mortification to see the naval service torn by faction; admirals declining to serve, captains threatening to resign, inferior officers, and even the common men, swayed by self-will, contemning subordination, and menacing mutiny: the spirit of the times pervaded the naval service, and many had adopted the horrible principle that their duty to serve their country and resist its enemies was subordinate to their individual opinions of the justice of the public cause or the propriety of public measures. Fortunately for the nation, Rodney was incapable of entertaining or admitting such notions. He obtained the command of twenty sail of the line and nine frigates, his force being augmented by squadrons under Rear-Admirals Digby and Sir John Lockhart Ross, and having under convoy three hundred merchant vessels bound to Portugal and the West

1779. Dec. Rodney obtains a command.

* 1st April to 6th May, 1778.

† Life and Correspondence of Admiral Rodney, by Major-General Mundy, vol. i. pp. 177, 179, 180. Lacretelle, Histoire de France, tome v. p. 216. It is satisfactory to add, on the authority of General Munday, that Messrs. Drummond, the London bankers, immediately on the Admiral's arrival, made him an advance which enabled him to acquit himself of his pecuniary obligations to the generous French nobleman.

Indies. At Plymouth he had to contend against the difficulties of an ill-regulated service; but his judgment and vigour stimulated indolence into useful action, and his spirit and firmness repressed all appearances of insubordination. All these obstacles were surmounted, and the Admiral was impatient to begin his expedition long before the weather, alternately tempestuous and dead calm, would permit.

Dec. 12th. Admiral Kempenfelt captures French transports.

During this period of detention, Rodney was cheered, and might have derived a favourable omen from a successful exploit of Admiral Kempenfelt. That brave officer, cruizing near Brest, with twelve sail of the line, fell in with the French fleet under the Count de Guichen, consisting of nineteen sail of the line, two armed en-flute, convoying troops to the West Indies. Of these he cut off fifteen, and so disabled the expedition, that only two ships of war reached their destination.

Dec. 29th. Rodney sails.

At length the elements permitted the Admiral to sail. His expedition was planned with judgment, and its objects kept so profoundly secret as to deceive the Bourbon courts. They could not conceive that so great a force, comprising part of the Channel fleet, would be employed to convoy the transports to the Straits, but thought that the Admiral would separate from them in a certain latitude; and therefore selected eleven men of war and two frigates from the grand fleet of Spain, with which Don Juan de Langara proceeded, expecting to intercept the supply.

8th Jan. Captures a Spanish fleet.

Rodney had the good fortune, soon after his departure, to take fifteen sail of Spanish merchantmen, with valuable cargoes, a new man-of-war of sixty-four guns, four frigates, and two smaller armed vessels.

16th Defeats Langara.

He then encountered Langara off Cape St. Vincent's; and, after a gallant action, maintained during great part of the night, captured the Admiral in the Phœnix of eighty guns, and three other men-of-war. Two more had struck, but were driven on shore by tempestuous weather, and one was lost; the San Domingo blew up early in the engagement, and every man on board perished. Rodney proceeded triumphantly to

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Gibraltar, and, after landing his stores, and affording some relief to Minorca, sailed, agreeably to his original destination, for the West Indies. Admiral Digby, returning to England with the Spanish prizes, the transports, and the ships belonging to the channel fleet, took the Prothée, a French sixty-four, and two vessels laden with military stores, being part of a convoy, the rest of which escaped. Rodney obtained the unanimous thanks of both Houses of Parliament, in voting which, individuals of all parties vied in eulogy and commendation, and the members of his own profession, particularly Lord Howe and Admiral Keppel, were most energetic in applause. He was also complimented with the freedom of the Cities of London and Edinburgh.

22nd Feb. Digby takes French ships.

29th Feb. and 1st March.

Prince William Henry in the navy.

In this expedition, his Majesty's third son, Prince William Henry, first learned to serve his country. He was placed as a midshipman on board the Prince George, bearing the flag of rear-admiral Digby, and his royal Highness entered into the profession, not as one who merely proposes to gratify curiosity or pursue amusement, but with a determination, and it was steadily pursued, to acquire practical experience, to submit to the duties of obedience, that he might beneficially exercise those of command. He had the good sense and discretion not to shew, in his dress or manner, any consciousness of superior rank; but, making his uniform his only garb, to share the labours and partake in the socialities of those around him*.

6th and 15th March. 26th Dec. 1779. Siege and capture of Charlestown.

When the failure of the attack on Savannah, and the departure of the French fleet, removed the impediments to a long projected operation, Sir Henry Clinton sailed from Sandy Hook, to attack Charlestown in South Carolina, with a force of about five thousand men, convoyed by Admiral Arbuthnot, leaving General Knyphausen to defend New York. The voyage was peculiarly inauspicious; the transports were scat-

* Histories and Gazettes; Beatson's Memoirs, vol. v. p. 4, 107. Mundy's Life of Lord Rodney, vol. i. p. 203, et seq.; but antecedent and succeeding parts of the volume display the genuine, undefiled patriotism, the clearness of judgment, and goodness of heart, which distinguished this illustrious commander.

tered by a storm; some fell into the hands of the enemy, others were lost; one vessel, containing the heavy ordnance, foundered; all the cavalry and most of the artillery horses perished, and a passage, which, in fair weather, might have been completed in ten days, was protracted to seven weeks. The General, at one period, despairing of the accomplishment of his original destination, projected an expedition to the West Indies, to solicit the sanction of General Vaughan, who commanded on that station, in an attack on Porto Rico; but a favourable change in the wind enabled him to reach Charlestown, which he immediately invested.

11th Feb.

The Americans, in consternation, adjourned the Assembly of the province, and intrusted their governor, John Rutledge, with all powers except privation of life. Two proclamations, requiring the militia and all men of property to join the army, produced little effect; an attempt to obtain ships and troops from the Spanish governor of Havannah failed; but, by the assistance of French engineers, the works of defence were strengthened and extended. Strong abbatis, deep holes dug at small distances, and a wet ditch, raked by redoubts and protected by a citadel mounting eighty pieces of cannon, guarded the town on every assailable side. The entrance of the harbour was impeded by the bar, and secured by a squadron of nine sail, under Commodore Whipple, occupying a station called Five-fathom-hole. Fort Moultrie and Sullivan's Island were improved with new works, and Lincoln, the American General, placing the whole chance of protecting the province on the fate of the city, shut himself up in it with seven thousand men, resolved to resist to the last extremity.

1st April.

Sir Henry Clinton made methodical approaches; the harbour was blockaded by the fleet, and the troops, slowly advancing, and establishing or fortifying posts to maintain communication with the sea, crossed Ashley River, and broke ground at eight hundred yards from the works.

20th March. 9th April.

Admiral Arbuthnot had already passed the bar,

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unopposed by Whipple, who retired to Charlestown, after having sunk eleven vessels of different descriptions across the mouth of Cooper river. The Admiral, however, with the first fair wind, passed Fort Moultrie without stopping to engage, and anchored near Fort Johnstone.

10th April.

A resolute refusal being returned to a summons to surrender, batteries were opened on the town; and as the advance of Arbuthnot obviated the necessity of maintaining a communication with the sea, Clinton dispatched strong bodies, under Colonels Tarleton and Webster, to cut off the intercourse of the garrison with the country. Tarleton, with no less judgment than activity, surprised the American force at Monk's Corner, routed them with the loss of all their stores, camp-equipage, baggage, and four hundred horses, with their arms and accoutrements; an acquisition of the greatest importance to the British army, while the conquest secured the passage of Cooper river; Clinton, being reinforced from New York, sent another detachment across, and Lord Cornwallis commanded the whole force.

14th.

Tarleton's enterprise, joined with the judicious measures of Clinton, and the able movements of Major Moncrieff, chief officer of the engineers, prevented all communication, and cut off from the garrison all hopes of retreat into the country. The approaches were carried on with vigour, the canal was gained by surprise, and the works advanced to the verge of the ditch; a storm appeared inevitable; and the British flag was already flying on Fort Moultrie, when the inhabitants petitioned Lincoln to accept terms of capitulation, which he had formerly refused, and, a council of war concurring in the measure, the British commander took possession of the town. The Americans were allowed some of the honours of war; but they lost nearly seven thousand prisoners, including the Governor, council, military, militia, and about a thousand American and French seamen. The whole naval force was taken or destroyed, with four hundred pieces of ordnance, and a considerable quantity of stores. By

12th May.

the cautious proceedings of Clinton, Lincoln was enabled to collect all his force within the town, from which no part could afterward escape. The British officers, in general, were highly extolled; Major Moncrieff, in the defence of Savannah and in this attack, shewed the utmost perfection in the science of an engineer, and Captain Elphinstone of the navy, by his judicious arrangements, secured the passage of the rivers Ashley and Cooper. Intelligence of this event, by far the most brilliant of the American war, was received in England just at the close of Lord George Gordon's riot, and greatly contributed to the restoration of calm and happiness at that critical moment.

Alarm of the Americans.

Nor was the alarm of the Americans inferior to the joy of the victors; their cause seemed abandoned by their new allies, and they entertained apprehensions that they should not be able to retain the rich and fertile Southern Provinces*. The information received by Sir Henry Clinton, on the temper and disposition of the people, was calculated to inspire moderate hope, but not excessive or blind confidence. Some persons of the first fortune in the province were stated to have dispositions as favourable as could be wished, from a conviction of their error, and feeling too late the miseries their fatal politics had produced, with the necessity of treading back the paths which led to their destruction. Others, who had been the tools of faction, declared their absolute ruin inevitable, unless the government, which they acknowledged preferable to any other they could hope to establish, were restored. The firm and constant loyalists were not numerous; they had left the town and retired into the country: indignant at the wrongs and insults to which they had been subjected, they were anxious that their oppressors should receive due punishment; and there was reason to apprehend that if it was refused by government, private means would be taken to effect the work of vengeance. The lower class, it was ob-

* See the Crisis, No. ix. in the Remembrancer, vol. x. p. 233.

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served, would submit to the government by which it was supported*.

When to these classes is added that of determined revolutionists, who, whatever appearances necessity might impose, would labour by all means, and await every favourable opportunity, to advance their original projects, it will be obvious that Clinton's situation was one of extraordinary difficulty. His measures were judicious, and well adapted to bring back to loyalty those important colonies. In an address to the inhabitants, he stated, that in consideration of the loyal blood spilt in the former well-intended, but ill-timed efforts to assist the King's troops, he had hitherto abstained from exciting the inhabitants to arms. The time was now arrived when every individual might, without apprehension, declare his sentiments; and it was the duty of every man to assist in restoring peace and good government. It was not his intention to call for unnecessary exertions; but it would be requisite for those who had families, to form a militia, under officers of their own choosing, for the maintenance of peace and good order; while those who had no families should embody for six months, under their own officers, to drive their rebel oppressors from the province, and, after the term of service, be freed from all but militia duty. Beside this well-conceived address, which was published as a hand-bill, the General issued three proclamations: the first subjected to confiscation the property of all who should appear in arms against the royal government, or compel others to join the enemy, or hinder those inclined to assist the King's forces. The second was a joint proclamation of the General and Admiral, as commissioners for restoring peace, promising such of the inhabitants as would return to their allegiance, and to those laws which they formerly boasted as their noblest inheritance, a re-establishment of their ancient rights and immunities under a free British government, exempt from taxation,

Clinton's address:

22nd May. and proclamations.

1st June.

* 15th May, 1780, Letter from James Simpson to Sir Henry Clinton. State Papers.

except by their own legislature. From these benefits, however, were exempted all who were polluted with the blood of their fellow citizens, wantonly and inhumanly shed under the mock forms of justice, for refusing submission to an usurpation which they abhorred, and adhering to that government with which they deemed themselves inseparably connected. The third proclamation, proceeding on the supposition that peace and good order were restored by the defeat of the American forces, relieved from the state of prisoners on parole, all the inhabitants, except the military, persons taken in Fort Moultrie and Charlestown, and those under actual confinement; they who neglected returning to their allegiance were to be treated as rebels and enemies. Two hundred and ten of the principal inhabitants of Charlestown concurred in a congratulatory address on the restoration of the province to the political connexion with Great Britain. Although the right of taxing by Parliament had excited considerable ferments, still, they said, the people naturally revolted at the idea of independency, which was first promulgated in the northern colonies; they looked back, with painful regret, to convulsions subversive of the British constitution, and productive of rank democracy, which, however carefully digested in theory, had, in practice, exhibited a system of tyrannic domination, only to be found among the uncivilized part of mankind, or in the history of the dark and barbarous ages of antiquity; they regretted the misery and ruin occasioned by the disregard of the King's overtures for accommodation, and would glory in displaying their zeal by efforts for the restoration of felicity under the royal government*.

3rd.

5th.

Formation of military force.

Expeditions against the Americans.

These sentiments were not confined to the subscribers of the address; great numbers assembled in arms, under the direction of Major Ferguson; but Clinton could not rely on these flattering appearances; the situation of affairs demanded his immediate pre-

* See these papers in the Remembrancer, vol. x. p. 80. et seq.

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sence at New York, and he had applied to government for his recall; but before his departure, he arranged three expeditions for subduing the interior, and counteracting the enemy. One ascended the Savannah, and another passed the Saluda to Ninety-six; both found the people in general loyal, and disposed to establish the regal government.

Pursuit of Burford.

The third expedition, commanded by Earl Cornwallis, crossed the Santée river, and marched up the north-east bank, in pursuit of Colonel Burford, who was retreating to North Carolina, with artillery, and waggons containing arms, ammunition, and cloathing.

22nd May.

Before the British troops could surmount impediments created by the Americans, Burford had already been

27th.

retreating ten days. A corps of a hundred and seventy foot, and a hundred mounted infantry, with a three-pounder, was detached in pursuit, under the spirited and enterprizing Colonel Tarleton, who was invested with discretionary powers. After a pursuit, pressed with great alacrity in a hot climate, Tarleton found

29th May. Engagement at Waxhaws.

himself in the presence of the enemy at Waxhaws; but his troops were enfeebled by a march of a hundred and five miles in fifty-four hours, and greatly outnumbered by the enemy, who had three hundred and eighty infantry, a body of cavalry, and two six-pounders. Both parties formed without interruption; but the ignorance of Burford, and the spirited and well-directed attack of Tarleton, soon decided the fate of the day; the whole convoy and two hundred prisoners were taken, and a hundred and seventy-two killed.

5th June. Clinton departs.

Intelligence of this success, and of the general prosperity of the province, cheered Sir Henry Clinton in the moment of his departure. His short administration in South Carolina was distinguished for judgment, vigour, and prudence. His manners conciliated many of the inhibitants, while the vigour of his proceedings restrained the turbulent; and his prudence in establishing commissioners of captures, afforded a seasonable relief to his own army, prevented the complaints of the inhabitants, and effected a great

saving to government*. Colonel Tarleton speedily rejoined Lord Cornwallis, who was now intrusted with the chief command, at the head of four thousand British troops. South Carolina being deemed sufficiently secure, the instructions left with Lord Cornwallis were, "constantly to regard the safety and "tranquillity of Charlestown, as the principal and "indispensable objects of his attention. When the "necessary arrangements for this purpose were com- "pleted, and the season suitable to the operations in "that climate should return, he was left at liberty (if "he judged it proper) to make a solid move into "North Carolina, on condition that it could be done "without endangering the safety of the posts com- "mitted to his charge."

Proceedings of Lord Cornwallis.

During the delay which occurred from the heat of the climate, and the necessity of forming magazines and securing communications, Lord Cornwallis occupied himself in commercial, military, and civil arrangements at Charlestown. He also sent trusty emissaries into North Carolina, informing the loyalists of his intention to enter that province, and advising them to reap their harvest, collect provisions, and remain in tranquillity till his arrival. These prudent instructions were unfortunately disregarded; a body of loyalists, under Colonel More, prematurely assembled in Tryon county, were routed and dispersed; the insurrection formed a pretext for persecution; the jails were filled with pretended traitors, and every day produced new sacrifices to the spirit of revolution. The perils to which this unfortunate class were subjected compelled a body of eight hundred to leave the province, and join Major M'Arthur at Cheraw Hill, in South Carolina.

The Americans were encouraged in these vigorous

* By a mistake in the seventh report of the commissioners of public accounts, the establishment of these commissioners of captures is ascribed to Lord Cornwallis. That nobleman did indeed pursue the measure with ability and integrity, but the regulation originated with Clinton. Although this meritorious officer produced before the commissioners of public accounts irrefragable documents for the correction of their report, he could never prevail on them to revive, after the peace, so unwelcome a subject as the expenses of the American war.

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1780. Exertions of the Americans.

efforts by the certainty of speedy aid from Virginia and other provinces, and a detachment from General Washington's army, amounting together to more than six thousand men, beside whom the legislature of Virginia had ordered five thousand, drafted from the militia, to serve as a corps of observation. The people of South Carolina began also to manifest treacherous and turbulent dispositions. The disloyal who had accepted protections, complained of compulsion, and hardly made a secret of their antipathy to the British government, while those who, through principle, had availed themselves of General Clinton's proclamation, were indignant at seeing these scarcely-concealed traitors enjoying immunities and accumulating advantages, which it required nothing but opportunity to turn against the English. Several inconsiderate military promotions enabled these traitors to effect great injury to the cause; one Lisle, in particular, carried over to the enemy a whole battalion of militia, with their arms and ammunition.

Treachery in South Carolina.

From these circumstances, and the increase of disloyalty, the proclamation of the third of June has been censured, as warranting hypocrisy on one hand, and spreading disaffection on the other. It is, however, to be considered, that when the proclamation was issued the province was considered secure from military invasion, and sufficiently strong to protect itself, if loyally inclined, under the sanction of the British force. The greater number of people in every country are indifferent to forms of government, nor were the mere planters and traders of South Carolina in general more attached to the American than the British cause. Violent parties of loyalists and revolutionists guided the conduct rather than the sentiments of the wealthy and quiescent. The capture of Charlestown reduced the American party to despair, and the loyalists were equally with their opponents included in the terms of parole in the articles of capitulation. The object of the proclamation was therefore to emancipate the loyal from a needless restraint, to enable those whom the pursuit of wealth and the love of ease would attach

to the predominating party to follow the bent of their dispositions without impediment, while the sturdy and incorrigible rebel, expressly exempted by the letter of the proclamation from the clemency of its provisos, was exposed to the severities which he had been instrumental in inflicting on the loyalists. In all public measures, freedom and security are the principal objects, and that government must be pitifully tyrannical which affects by general regulations to prevent the unreasonable complaints of party jealousy, or obviate the effects of treacherous hypocrisy. These ends can only be produced by the vigilance, caution, and discernment of those to whom the executive powers are intrusted; they alone can restrain the artifices of the disloyal, and, by the prudent use of authority, prevent the intrusion of traitors into posts of trust. With the view of conciliating the colony, and establishing the regal government in the hearts of the people, the proclamation was wise and judicious; no complaint was heard, as in the Jerseys, that those who sought shelter under it were plundered or treated with indignity; and if the arms of Britain had been generally prosperous, and her power generally respected, it would undoubtedly have produced beneficial consequences. But, at that period, fortune seemed peculiarly malignant. A great force was preparing by the friends of Congress, and exaggerated rumours were circulated and generally encouraged of a hostile armament, destined to co-operate with them. Britain was, at the same time, menaced by an adverse confederacy of neutral nations; riot and insubordination prevailed in Ireland and Scotland; England was agitated with political discontents, the ministry were alarmed and insecure, and the cause of government, even in the seat of empire, appeared forlorn and helpless. What wonder then that a colony of America, divided among friends and enemies equally violent, and a third party selfish and lukewarm, should prefer the cause of its neighbours, a cause which it had once avowed as its own, in preference to the interests of a country opposed

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in every quarter, and apparently on the verge of domestic civil war?

1780. Cantonment of the British army.

The principal force on the frontiers of South Carolina was at Camden, under the command of Lord Rawdon, hutted against the heat of the weather; Major M'Arthur was advanced to Cheraw Hill in the vicinity of the Pedee river, to cover the country between Camden and George Town. The chain to the westward was connected with Ninety-six by Rocky Mount, a strong post on the Wateree, occupied by Colonel Turnbull. Colonel Balfour, and afterward Colonel Cruger, commanded at Ninety-six. Major Ferguson's corps, and a body of loyal militia, traversed part of the province between the Wateree and Saluda, and sometimes approached the borders of North Carolina. Lieutenant-colonel Brown held possession of Augusta, the frontier town of Georgia; Savannah was garrisoned by Hessians and Provincials under Colonel Alured Clark. Three regiments, two battalions, and a large detachment of royal artillery, and some corps of Provincials, were at Charlestown, under Brigadier-General Paterson; and the fatiguing duty of maintaining the communication between the principal posts of this extensive cantonment was allotted to the legion dragoons. The grand magazine was formed at Camden; but, from the heat of the weather, the supplies were slowly forwarded.

Gates commands the Americans.

Congress having resolved to exert the most strenuous efforts for the recovery of South Carolina and Georgia, the chief command of their forces in that quarter was given to General Gates, who had gained much reputation at Saratoga; while Colonel Sumter, a refugee, after the capture of Charlestown, raised a corps in North Carolina, which was augmented by other fugitives from South Carolina. The collection of such a force rendered it necessary for Major M'Arthur to fall back from Cheraw Hill to Camden.

30th July. Attack on Rocky Mount.

Reinforced by the traitor Lisle, Colonel Sumter made an attack on Rocky Mount, but was in three separate attacks repulsed, with considerable loss, by

1780.

the steady valour of Colonel Turnbull and a small garrison. He next assailed the post at Hanging Rock, occupied by a hundred and forty British, and several corps of loyal Provincials, under the command of Major Carden. The Provincials, who were first attacked, gave ground with precipitation, and the British troops nobly sustained the whole weight of the assailants; but superiority of numbers rendered the day doubtful, till forty mounted infantry, on their return from Rocky Mount, by a judicious feint, terrified Sumter's corps, and compelled them to retreat in confusion, leaving a hundred killed and wounded. Lord Cornwallis immediately placed Hanging Rock in perfect security, by a reinforcement under Major Mecan. 6th August.

Intelligence of the formidable preparations of the enemy, induced Lord Cornwallis to repair to Camden, where the effective force did not exceed two thousand, while that advancing against them, under General Gates, together with the militia, led by Caswel, Rutherford, Porterfield, and Baron De Kalbe, amounted to six thousand, exclusive of a thousand under Sumter. Notwithstanding this disparity, the British General marched two hours before midnight to attack the enemy encamped at Clermont, in South Carolina; his front division being commanded by Lieutenant-colonel Webster, and his centre by Lord Rawdon. He had received intelligence that Gates intended to move forward the same night, and at two o'clock in the morning the advanced guards of both armies met. After a temporary confusion, and some slight skirmishes, both, as if by compact, betook themselves to repose, awaiting the dawn. On reconnoitring, Lord Cornwallis found his situation extremely eligible; a swamp on either hand preserved him from being outflanked, while the narrowness of the front diminished the advantage of superior numbers on the side of the enemy. 10th August. Battle of Camden. 16th.

At dawn, both armies formed in two divisions; but, General Gates attempting to change the situation of two brigades of militia, Lord Cornwallis commenced a well-judged, rapid, and effectual attack. The Ame-

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rican militia were broken, threw down their arms, and fled; the other division and the reserve maintained a resolute and honourable conflict; but Colonel Webster, instead of pursuing the fugitives, wisely directed the efforts of his division against them; the cavalry, under Major Hanger and Colonel Tarleton, poured in with irresistible impetuosity, and determined the fate of the day. Rout and confusion could not be more complete; during a pursuit of twenty-two miles, the cavalry found the ground strewed with arms, and men whom fatigue prevented from further flight. All the baggage, stores, and camp equipage, together with seven pieces of cannon, fell into the hands of the victors. Upward of eight hundred were slain, and among a thousand captured was the Baron De Kalbe, mortally wounded.

Tarleton routs Sumter. 18th August.

This important victory reflected great honour on the British army, in which Lord Cornwallis, and Lord Rawdon, then only twenty-five years of age, conspicuously shared. The advantages were rendered complete by the surprise of Sumter, whom Tarleton, with his usual ability and expedition, overtook, at Catawba ford, on the verge of a friendly settlement. With no more than a hundred dragoons, and sixty of the light infantry, he vanquished more than eight hundred Americans, killing and wounding a hundred and fifty, and taking three hundred. He also rescued two hundred and fifty prisoners, and recaptured several waggons laden with rum and other stores, which Sumter had taken in the course of his expedition; and all the provincial stores, ammunition, baggage, artillery, and a thousand stand of arms, rewarded the valour and diligence of the conquerors.

Severities of Lord Cornwallis.

Lord Cornwallis, awaiting the supplies requisite for his expedition into North Carolina, sought to restrain the perfidy of the Americans by severe edicts. The provocation was abundant, if the measure was wise. His Lordship sequestered the estates of all who opposed the re-establishment of the royal government in South Carolina; death was denounced against those who, after receiving British protections, joined the enemy; some of the most hardened were executed;

and many persons of superior rank, who, being allowed the benefit of parole in Charlestown, had maintained a traitorous correspondence with General Gates, were shipped off to St. Augustine, in East Florida, and again allowed their parole, but under restrictions. The opinion formed of these measures depended too much on subsequent events; could the British have retained their ascendancy, the punishments were merciful rather than severe; but, in the course of succeeding transactions, they afforded a pretext of retaliation, which was urged to the full extent of the precedent.

8th Sep. Major Ferguson routed.

At this period, Lord Cornwallis prepared a judicious plan for overpowering all opposition in North Carolina; he penetrated through the hostile settlement Waxhaws, to a town called Charlotte. One part of his plan was to detach Major Ferguson with a corps of about a thousand loyal militia, for the purpose of approaching the frontier: the service was important; but the militia, unsupported by regulars, could not be relied on. Colonel Clarke, an inhabitant of Georgia, had collected a force, and made an unsuccessful attack on Augusta; Ferguson, hoping to intercept his retreat, advanced near the mountains, where he was encountered by a select body of fifteen hundred backwoodsmen. These men, almost in a savage state, collected with various views under different commanders, well mounted, unincumbered, and armed with rifles, overtook Ferguson at King's Mountain: he defended himself with great skill and valour, but their mode of fighting prevented success. They attacked in different quarters; and wherever the Major presented his front, the opposing party fled from the bayonet; but another corps at the same moment advanced and assailed his rear. After maintaining this unequal combat during an hour, he received a mortal wound; his men were disheartened, and his successor reluctantly surrendered. The victors, with characteristic inhumanity, maltreated the corpse of the dead commander, hanged several of the prisoners, and treated others with detestable cruelty.

9th October.

Effect of this disaster.

This fatal disaster disconcerted the plans of Lord Cornwallis. Although abundantly supplied with pro-

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visions at Charlotte, he sustained great inconvenience from the inveterate hostility of the natives, and therefore gladly retreated for the protection of South Carolina, deferring the prosecution of his enterprise till he should receive a reinforcement expected from Sir Henry Clinton. This interval was employed by Tarleton in checking the inroads of a partizan named Marion, who, after the retreat of the mountaineers, infested the province.

November. Tarleton disperses Sumter's forces.

Colonel Sumter, having again collected a force, effected a junction with Clarke and Brannen, commanders of straggling parties, and projected an attack on Ninety-six. Tarleton was recalled from his expedition against the eastern parts of the province to oppose this force, and, pursuing his object with his accustomed celerity, would have effected a surprise, had not Sumter been informed of his danger by a deserter. Tarleton, however, learning his retreat, overtook him

20th Nov.

at Blackstock's Hill, with a detachment of eighty cavalry, and, without waiting for the arrival of the infantry, gallantly assailed a force greatly superior, wounded the commander, and dispersed his troop. The victory is disputed; but all its benefits undoubtedly resulted from this exploit.

End of the campaign.

The defeat of Major Ferguson not only frustrated the hopes which Lord Cornwallis had entertained, of being joined by a considerable body of loyalists, but animated the insurgents in both Corolinas. The ill-success of General Gates at Camden was a sufficient motive with Congress for superseding him, although the measure was accompanied with personal civilities: General Greene was his successor; but no transaction of importance marked the residue of the campaign*.

Transactions at New York.

During the absence of the Commander in Chief, and after his return, no remarkable military exploit was performed in the vicinity of New York. The winter was severe beyond all precedent; the rivers, and

* Beside the other histories, I have consulted Tarleton's History of the Campaigns of 1780 and 1781, Mackenzie's Strictures, Ramsay's History of the Revolution of South Carolina, Johnson's Life of General Greene, and the pamphlets published by Lord Cornwallis and Sir Henry Clinton, and have received much private information.

even arms of the sea, were covered with ice sufficiently thick to admit the passage of the heaviest artillery. The city was thus deprived of the defence arising from an insular situation, and reduced to great extremities for want of provisions and fuel. General Knyphausen adopted vigorous and judicious measures of protection; but General Washington was not in a condition to venture an attack. His army was also in extreme distress; their force weakened by the large detachments sent to Charlestown, and the remaining regiments mutinous, through famine and despair. Thus mutual weakness occasioned mutual safety. No enterprise was attempted till the breaking up of the frost, except an unsuccessful attack by the American Lord Sterling, against Staten Island, and an expedition to a post called Young's House, in the neighbourhood of White Plains, which was gallantly stormed by Colonel Morton, forty of the enemy killed and ninety captured.

January.

3rd Feb.

General Knyphausen, receiving information that the American army was generally mutinous, and the inhabitants of the Jerseys desirous to re-establish the ancient government, detached a considerable force under Generals Matthew and Sterling. On landing at Elizabeth Town, they found the militia prepared for resistance, and the mutiny in the army confined to loud complaints against want and hardship, but not calculated to produce a revolt to the British government. Perceiving no hopes of accomplishing their intentions, they remained a few days on the island to avoid the imputation of flight, and were joined by Clinton, in his return from Charlestown. Although displeased at the premature and unexpected effort which frustrated a combined movement he had in contemplation, he co-operated in an attack on Springfield, which was captured and burnt, and then returned to New York.

7th June. Incursions into the Jerseys.

Springfield taken.

General Washington detached General Wayne, with two thousand men, to attack Bergen Point, and carry off the cattle reserved for supplying the British army. Seventy men stationed in a blockhouse, pro-

Attack on Bergen Point.

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tected by abbatis, repulsed this disproportionate force, killed more than their whole number, took several prisoners, and recaptured part of the cattle.

1780. 10th July. Arrival of reinforcement from France.

Meanwhile, a long-expected reinforcement from France arrived at Rhode Island: it consisted of six thousand troops commanded by the Comte de Rochambeau, and seven sail of the line, five frigates, and five smaller armed vessels, under M. de Ternay. To prevent jealousy, the French government, with liberal policy, raised Washington to the rank of lieutenant-general in their armies, and thus placed M. de Rochambeau under his command.

Ineffectual attempt on Rhode Island.

On receiving indisputable information of the destination of this armament, Clinton proposed to Admiral Arbuthnot a plan for landing some British troops at Rhode Island, while the fleet blocked up the French squadron—a measure which, if promptly executed, would have brought the whole force, naval and military, into imminent danger. The Admiral at first declined it, in hopes of meeting the enemy at sea, and afterward deferred co-operation till they had fortified themselves at Rhode Island; and the expedition was not undertaken till too late to succeed. Sir Henry Clinton proceeded with eight thousand men to Huntingdon Bay on Long Island; but Arbuthnot, having viewed the position of the French fleet, declared it unassailable; and Washington, considerably reinforced, moved to Peek's Kill, intending to attack New York. Clinton, mortified and disappointed, fell back for the protection of his head-quarters, while Washington drew off his forces, and retired, to avoid a general action.

13th Aug.

Naval proceedings in the West Indies.

As the further proceedings of the combined armies depended on the arrival of the French fleet from the West Indies, it becomes necessary to recapitulate transactions in that quarter. During winter, the British navy annoyed the commerce of the enemy, and maintained a gallant and successful struggle against superior strength and numbers. The most remarkable naval action occurred between Captain Cornwallis, commanding a ship of sixty-four guns, one of fifty, and one of forty-four, against four French seventy-

25th Mar.

fours and two frigates. It continued two whole days: on the third, at the appearance of another British ship of war and a frigate, the French commander made his escape.

27th Mar. Arrival of Rodney.

The arrival of Admiral Rodney rendered the British nearly equal in number to the French fleet; but the skill and spirit of the valiant Admiral gave a decided superiority. The Comte De Guichen appeared off St. Lucie, but was deterred from making an attack by the judicious disposition of the naval and military force; and, in return, Rodney braved him during two successive days off Fort Royal, Martinique; but could not draw him from his place of refuge.

Ineffectual efforts and skirmishes.

2d April.

5th April.

On Rodney's return to St. Lucie, De Guichen ventured out of port with twenty-three ships of the line. The British Admiral pursued with twenty sail, and in two days brought him to action, and compelled him to seek shelter in Guadaloupe. Some of Rodney's officers, not rightly understanding his signals, did not support him sufficiently, as his flag-ship, the Sandwich, was for a considerable time exposed alone to a disproportioned fire. Another unimportant encounter afterward took place; but the French availed themselves of their superiority in sailing to avoid a decisive action.

15th and 19th May.

Arrival of a Spanish fleet.

Failing in these efforts to bring on a general engagement, Rodney occupied a windward station, to intercept a Spanish squadron from Cadiz; but the admiral, Don Solano, prudently kept to northward of the usual track, and, instead of proceeding to Martinique, put in at Guadaloupe, where he was joined by De Guichen, with a reinforcement augmented to twelve sail of the line, beside frigates, and eighty-three transports, conveying twelve thousand troops, with a proportionate train of artillery; but pestilence raged among the transports, and discord arose between the admirals. Solano repaired to the Havannah, and De Guichen, retiring to St. Domingo, convoyed the homeward bound trade to Europe. Deceived by this unexpected proceeding, Rodney sailed with eleven ships of the line and four frigates to the coast of America, where he expected again to encounter his old opponent.

Disagreements of the allied admirals.

5th July. De Guichen returns to Europe. Rodney goes to America.

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Effects of these measures in America

The allied American and French army were not less surprised by this movement than the British Admiral. In confident expectation of effectual aid from De Guichen, great preparations had been made for expelling the English from New York; but a new system of operation now becoming necessary, an interview was effected between General Washington and the French commanders, at Hartford in Connecticut, situate mid-way between the two camps.

Defection of Arnold.

In this interval occurred one of the most extraordinary incidents of the war. General Arnold was, from his talents and approved valour, considered a chief supporter of the American cause: he embraced it with enthusiasm, and, from the commencement of hostilities, had, by his activity and genius, rendered essential services, at least equal to any other person engaged. He was descended from one of the best families in New England; his ancestor, Benedict Arnold, being the first governor of Rhode Island. The superiority of his address and attainments rendered him an object of suspicion and dislike to the less refined members of Congress. After the evacuation of Canada in 1776, his merits were treated with disregard; he was overlooked in a list of promotions, and subjected to the command of those who had been his inferiors. His accounts were at the same time left unsettled, and reports propagated injurious to his character for integrity. In vain he solicited redress, and the appointment of a committee to revise his accounts; in vain General Washington interested himself in his behalf, and proved the justice of his requests, displaying with proper warmth his merits "as a judicious, brave officer, of great activity, enterprize, and perseverance*;" but Congress would not take any measures for the adjustment of his demands. After rendering several intermediate services, particularly by the sagacious advice which enabled Washington to effect the surprise of Trenton, Arnold was employed under Gates against Burgoyne; but, notwithstanding his

* See Washington's Letter to Congress, dated 12th May, 1777, in Washington's Letters, vol. ii. p. 72.

subordinate station, his activity and judgment directed the most important proceedings: he was considered in the British camp as the efficient commander of the opposing army, and his promptitude in changing the disposition of a part of the American troops, unauthorized by General Gates, was a principal cause of the capture of the British army. His conduct in this situation was not exempt from cavil; but the brilliancy of his achievements silenced for a time the clamours of malevolence. On the evacuation of Philadelphia, he was placed in an official situation for the protection of property and securing that which was confiscated. Here he received the French plenipotentiary, lodged and entertained him in a manner which disgusted the parsimonious Americans; the circumstances of his fortune were minutely investigated, and stated to be unequal to the splendour of his establishment; reports were spread that he had irretrievably deranged his affairs by desperate and unsuccessful exertions in trade and privateering; and he was accused of peculation. At the same time, the freedom with which he had expressed himself against the alliance with France was implacably remembered. When his character was July, 1779. rendered suspicious and odious by such means, and his military exploits no longer the objects of immediate consideration, Congress referred his accounts to a board of commissioners, who rejected above half his demands. Arnold appealed to a committee of Congress; but their report was still more disadvantageous. It is also asserted that he was tried by a court-martial for embezzling national property, and reprimanded in public by General Washington, in pursuance of the sentence*; but this appears highly improbable, considering that Washington still reposed confidence in him, leaving in his charge the important post of West Point in the highlands on the North river, essential to the communication between the northern and middle colonies, and denominated, from its unassailable strength, the Gibraltar of North America.

* See Remembrancer, vol. xi. p. 100.

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1780. Fate of Major André.

Arnold solicited the command of this post only with the view of rendering an eminent service to the English. He had been in correspondence with Sir Henry Clinton eighteen months, and in that period had supplied much valuable information. He commenced the communication by declaring his resolution to renounce the American cause in consequence of the French alliance, requiring only personal safety and indemnity for the property he must sacrifice. Clinton readily embraced his proposal, hoping that, by some signal and adequate benefit, he would make atonement for the injuries he had done his country. The moment now seemed to have arrived, as the surrender of West Point, and its dependent posts, would have been a fatal blow to the American cause. A negotiation was accordingly commenced; and, when the project was ripe for execution, Major André, Adjutant-General of the British army, an officer in whose prudence and address Sir Henry Clinton reposed the greatest confidence, and who had chiefly conducted the correspondence between him and General Arnold, was commissioned to adjust the final arrangement*. He was conveyed from the Vulture sloop by night, in a boat dispatched by Arnold, landed on neutral ground, and held a conference with him till the approach of day. The American General, fearful of discovery, advised Major André not to return on board the Vulture, but conveyed him to a place of concealment within the American lines, where he remained till night. During the day, the sloop had shifted her position, and, the boatmen refusing to convey André on board, he was compelled to attempt reaching New York by land; and, by the direction of Arnold, changed his regimentals for a plain suit, and received a passport under the name of John Anderson. In all these particulars he acted in contradiction to the ex-

21st Sept.

22nd Sept.

* The military services of this young officer had been most exemplary. He was Aid-de-camp to General Grey, and to Sir Henry Clinton, and, after Lord Rawdon's resignation, had been virtually the principal in the Adjutant-General's department. He volunteered his services, and was permitted to go on the enterprize much against the inclination of Sir Henry Clinton.

press injunctions of his General, who charged him not, on any account, to change his name or dress, or possess himself of writings by which the nature of his embassy might be traced; all which André had the candour to avow after he had been arrested, in a letter to Sir Henry Clinton, full of gratitude and respect*: but Arnold's life had already been endangered by the failure of a plan for meeting, and a repugnance to expose him again to similar hazard probably swayed Major André.

Protected by the passport, he had already passed the lines, and conceived himself free from danger, when a patrole of three men sprang from a wood and seized his horse. In a moment of surprise, the unfortunate André inquired of the soldiers "whence they "came?" and to their answer "from below," replied, "and so am I," avowing himself to be a British officer. He discovered his error too late; the captors searched him, and finding several papers concealed in various parts of his dress, carried him before their commander, resisting the offers of his watch and money, and promises of future advantages, if they would accompany him to New York†. 22nd Sept.

During his examination before the American Colonel of militia, Major André continued his assumed name of John Anderson, and had sufficient address to obtain the transmission of a letter to Arnold, who escaped to the British head-quarters. The captive had now no further occasion for disguise; he wrote to General Washington a full and frank statement of the circumstances which occasioned his being within the American lines, exculpating himself from the imputation of being a spy, and demanding, "whatever "might be his fate, a decent treatment."

Washington referred the case to a board of fourteen general officers, all Americans, except La Fayette and the Baron De Stuben, before whom André was compelled to appear. The facts alleged against him 19th Sept.

* See this well-written and most affectionate letter, Annual Register for the same year.

† Such is the account at first given.

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were chiefly drawn from his own letters, and supported by his own answers to interrogatories unfairly administered, while he was, by situation, precluded from the advantage of adducing explanatory testimony; the board reported, that, agreeably to the law and usage of nations, he ought to suffer death as a spy.

23th Sept.

From the moment of his capture, no exertions were spared to avert his fate. Colonel Robinson, commander of the loyal Americans, and Sir Henry Clinton, wrote to General Washington, affirming that he had been sent to confer, under a flag of truce. Arnold certified the same fact, and further insisted that every subsequent proceeding had been sanctioned by his authority, which he had a right to exercise according to his discretion. These letters were produced before the board of officers; but a previous question was artfully put to the captive, who, in answer, is said to have denied coming on shore with a flag of truce*.

30.h Sept.

After promulgation of the sentence, Sir Henry Clinton deputed Lieutenant-General Robertson, with Andrew Elliot, Esquire, and the honourable William Smith, Governor and Chief-Justice of New York, to state such facts as could not be disclosed to the board. General Washington would not receive them, but appointed General Greene, President of the court which condemned Major André, to meet General Robertson, the person who accompanied him not being permitted to land. In this conference, Robertson pleaded the cause of humanity, urged the friendship of the Commander-in-Chief toward the object of intercession, the hazard many Americans would incur in case of retaliation, and the previous moderation of Sir Henry Clinton, who, on several occasions, had shewn the most humane attention to General Washington's intercession in favour of avowed spies, and had still in his power many delinquents. General Robertson offered to prove, by unexceptionable testimony, that

* The fact of André having given such an answer is only proved by the report published by Congress: but it may reasonably be doubted, considering their report to be the only one extant, and that the prisoner had neither advocate, witness, nor friend on the spot.

André went on shore in a boat, bearing a flag of truce, with the knowledge and under the protection of Arnold, who was commander of the district*; and he strongly urged the injustice of considering Major André as a spy, merely on the foundation of an improper phrase in a letter to General Washington. None of these arguments or proposals had the desired effect; and an offer to exchange, for the intended victim, any prisoner whom the Americans should select, was equally disregarded. Finding his arguments and offers encountered by an insurmountable obstinacy, which might be attributed to the rancour of the contest, General Robertson proposed a reference to disinterested foreigners, acquainted with the laws of war and of nations, and indicated Generals Knyphausen and Rochambeau; but this candid proposition was not complied with. A letter written by Arnold, repeating his explanations of André's situation, and threatening retaliation if the sentence against him was executed, produced, as might be expected, no good effect; every sentiment of humanity and policy was absorbed in the base desire of revenge: General Washington justified the decision of the board; and, to their indelible disgrace, no French officer interfered in a cause so interesting to a polite and humane people; on the contrary, La Fayette urged the fate of the unfortunate captive with unremitting malignity.

The compassion which was banished from the breasts of the superior officers was amply displayed by the subalterns and privates of the American, and by all ranks of the British army. They could not contemplate, without emotion, a youth in the prime of life, brave, amiable, and highly accomplished, doomed to an ignominious death for an act which could not be imputed to a dishonourable motive, and which, if it might, by forced construction, subject him to sentence as a spy, left nevertheless a wide and honourable distinction between his conduct and that usually pursued

* This uncontradicted assertion of the same fact, after the decision of the board of officers, renders André's pretended confession additionally doubtful.

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by persons in the like situation. The whole behaviour of this amiable officer was distinguished by magnanimity and jealous regard for his reputation. During his examination, for it could not be called a trial, he studiously avoided every disclosure which might affect the interests or character of those with whom he had been engaged. He received the sentence without alarm or dejection, acknowledged the politeness with which he was treated during his captivity, and only solicited the sad privilege of dying by the musket like a soldier, and not by the cord like a felon. Uninformed whether his request would be granted or not, he walked with firmness, composure and dignity, toward the place of execution, arm-in-arm with the officers of his guard. At sight of the preparations which announced the disgrace reserved for his final moments, he exclaimed with emotion, "Must I then die in this "manner!"—but soon recovering his calmness, he added, "it will be but a momentary pang." With an unruffled countenance, he ascended the cart, desiring that the spectators would attest his courage at the great moment of the termination of his existence*. In the opinion of all liberal and generous-minded men, the manner of the execution was infinitely more disgraceful to those who inflicted than to him who suffered it.

2nd Oct.

It is not necessary now to discuss the question whether, in the strict exercise of national law, André, acting under the direction, and protected by the pass of the regular commander of the district, could or could not properly be deemed a spy: to say that he could not, would be to seek a refinement never safely to be attempted in treating of public law. But if it is granted that his life was justly forfeited, nothing but a mean and malignant spirit could have dictated the refusal of his request to die the death of a soldier and not that of a felon. Neither the importance of his life nor the effect of the example warranted severity so savage. The proceeding against this brave and unfor-

* See the papers, letters, &c. on this subject in the Remembrancer, vol. xi. p. 1, and 101.

tunate officer has been defended by writers, both American and French, with a heat and labour which shew a consciousness that they had a difficult task to perform. The catastrophe filled all Europe with regret, if not stronger emotion, and the high qualities of the victim occasioned, even among the Americans, sentiments of generous sympathy in his fate*.

Sir Henry Clinton, who never ceased to lament the unworthy fate of this amiable and accomplished young man, complied with one of his latest requests, by permitting his company, somewhat irregularly, to be sold for the benefit of his female relatives, whom he also strongly recommended to the benevolence of government. In answer, he was assured of the great concern felt by the King at the catastrophe; his approbation of the disposal of the commission; his grant of a pension to the mother of the deceased officer, and his anxiety to efface all stain from the family, arising from the ignominy of his death, by offering the honour of knighthood to his brother†.

7th Oct. Arnold's proclamation.

Arnold was appointed a colonel in the British service, with the rank of brigadier-general of provincial forces, and he obtained £6,315 as a compensation for his losses. In vindication of his conduct, he issued "an address to the inhabitants of America," in which he unfolded the factious and false pretences by which Congress had effected the separation of the colonies from the mother-country, and established an arbitary tyranny over the lives and property of their fellow-subjects; while with abject meanness they crouched before the emissaries of France,

* Letters between Lord George Germaine and Sir Henry Clinton, from 7th May to 28th Nov. 1780. State Papers. It may be fit to add, that the feeling and spirit of the nation have been shewn, by removing his remains to Westminster Abbey, where a beautiful monument is erected to his memory.

† Beside the histories generally referred to, I have consulted Sparks's Life of Washington, vol. i. p. 339, et seq. The Life and Treason of Benedict Arnold, by the same intelligent author, and a pamphlet published in Paris in 1816, by M. de Marbois, who states himself to have been a witness of the transaction. This writer, on what authority I know not, states that Silas Deane was a traitor to the American cause, selling the secrets of Congress to the English ministry. (Complot, &c. Pref. p. xliii.) Far from discovering any ground for such a supposition, I always find that in the most confidential dispatches this man is mentioned with peculiar harshness and contempt, most frequently, after the execution of John the Painter, as "that infamous incendiary Deane."

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their natural enemy, who had neither will or power to protect them. He considered the war, on the part of America, defensive, till France joined in the combination; but denied that when the second proposals were made by British commissioners, America was entangled in the alliance with that country. The overtures were avowed by the whole continent to exceed the wishes and expectations of the people; and if suspicion of the national sincerity existed, it could be found only in the extreme liberality of the offers. He lamented the impolicy, tyranny, and contemptuous injustice with which Congress had studiously neglected taking the collective sentiments of the people on the British propositions, as a dangerous sacrifice of the great interests of America to the partial views of a proud, ancient, and crafty foe. The pretended treaty of Versailles amounted only to an overture, the people of America had given no authority to conclude it, nor had they ever sanctioned its ratification; even the articles of confederation were not yet signed. Preferring, therefore, the sincere overtures of Great Britain to the insidious offers of France, he had determined to retain his arms and command only till an opportunity should occur of surrendering them, and accomplishing an event of decisive importance, which in its execution would prevent the effusion of blood. The great political truths contained in this address were not capable of refutation; but the General's account of his own conduct and motives was examined with great severity*.

In a subsequent proclamation, addressed "to the "officers and soldiers of the continental army, who "have the real good of their country at heart, and "who are determined no longer to be the tools and "dupes of Congress or of France," General Arnold made strong appeals to the interest, necessities, and prejudices of his countrymen. He offered those who would join the British standard, rank, bounty, and liberal allowance for their horses, arms, and accoutrements. He imputed their distress, want of pay, hun-

* See Remembrancer, vol. x. p. 344, vol. xi. p. 100.

ger and nakedness, to the negligent contempt and corruption of Congress. America, he observed, was now only a land of widows, orphans, and beggars; and should the parent nation cease her exertions, no security would remain for enjoying the consolation of that religion for which the ancestors of the people had braved the ocean, the heathen, and the wilderness. He himself had lately seen the mean and profligate Congress at mass for the soul of a Roman Catholic in purgatory, and participating in the rites of a church, against whose anti-christian corruptions the pious ancestors of the Americans would have witnessed with their blood*. Contrary to all expectation, this proclamation produced no effect: the necessities of the American army were not relieved, but shame and indignation produced a decisive conduct; the ambition of sustaining a respectable character in company with their new associates the French, contributed to give energy to the dictates of patriotism; and from this period, the desertions so frequently complained of occurred no more†.

Exchange of Burgoyne's army.

No military transaction of note distinguished the remainder of the campaign; but the exchange of the British army captured at Saratoga was at length accomplished. The perfidious policy of Congress toward these brave men had long been undefended even by their warmest partisans, and the American prisoners taken at Charlestown had friends sufficiently numerous and clamorous to compel their rulers to an act of justice, so shamefully evaded and delayed.

Naval transactions in Europe.

May.

July.

In the European seas, some gallant and spirited actions redounded to the glory of the British flag. Beside these, Admiral Geary, who succeeded to the command of the Channel fleet on the death of Sir Charles Hardy, made prize of twelve French merchantmen, part of a convoy from Port-au-Prince. This advantage was overbalanced by the capture of more

* See the proclamation, Remembrancer, vol. xi. p. 20. It can now be considered only on the level of an ordinary recruiting hand-bill; although it once derived, from the character and circumstances of the author, a momentary celebrity.

† Ramsay, vol. ii. p. 204.

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1780. 9th August. Capture of the British East and West India fleet.

than forty East and West India ships by the combined French and Spanish squadrons, and which were carried into Cadiz. The acquisition was of large value, and peculiarly injurious to British interests, as it comprised military stores essential to the defence of the settlements. The number of prisoners was two thousand eight hundred and sixty-five: the event occasioned lively exultation in the enemy, and proportionate dissatisfaction in England: the mode of employing the channel fleet being severely arraigned, Admiral Geary resigned the command, which, being refused by Admiral Barrington, was conferred on Admiral Darby.

Quebec fleet taken by the Americans.

The Americans too were not without their share of naval success; some of their privateers intercepted the outward-bound Quebec fleet off Newfoundland; and, though several were recaptured, secured fourteen valuable ships.

CHAPTER THE FORTIETH.

1779—1780—1781.

Views of foreign powers.—Attempt to negotiate a separate peace with Spain — proposed cessions in exchange for Gibraltar.—Mr. Cumberland goes to Madrid—his hopes.—Efforts of France.—End of the negotiation.—Expectation of a neutral league.—Conduct and transactions of northern states.—Prussia.—First partition of Poland.—Conduct of Prussia — Denmark — Sweden — Holland—Motives of the Dutch.—First Memorial of Sir Joseph Yorke.—Memorial of the Dutch merchants.—Second Memorial of Sir Joseph Yorke.—Exertions of the French party.—Succours demanded by England.—Dispute respecting Paul Jones.—Succours refused. — Engagement between Commodore Fielding and Count Byland.—Formation of the armed neutrality.—Conduct of the Empress of Russia.—Accession of different powers.—Capture of Laurens.—Discovery of a treaty between Holland and America.—Memorials on the subject.—War declared.

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At this period, it is necessary to mention an attempt at negotiation; the addition of an ancient ally to the open foes of Great Britain, and the formation of an unexampled league or confederacy for preventing the effect of our naval efforts and affording facilities to our enemies.

Attempted negotiation with Spain.

Spain engaged in the war not only without any just cause, but in opposition to all sound political principles. The desire to recover Gibraltar was her leading motive, and that desire had been shewn by her conduct, almost at all periods since its capture. During the reign of the present king, every project and calcu-

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1780. lation for the surprise, blockade, or assault of that fortress had been listened to with eager attention: the able plans of the Duc de Crillon, the calculations of experienced engineers, and the wild project of a British adventurer, Mr. John Stuart, a natural son of Lord Blantyre, were honoured with attention, as flattering the enthusiastic passion of his Most Catholic Majesty. To obtain this fortress, *per fas aut nefas*, was an avowed design of the King. Great disappointment was felt at Madrid in consequence of the failure of the mighty projects for invading England by means of the united French and Spanish fleet, and many other circumstances conduced to create a distaste to the alliance

1779. Nov. with France, and predispose her ally to a separate peace.

An unauthorized suggestion, made by Commodore Johnstone, the British commander on the Lisbon station, that his government might be induced to purchase the friendship of Spain by the cession of Gibraltar was eagerly caught at by Florida Blanca, and Mr. Hussey, an Irish priest, chaplain to the King of Spain, who had belonged to the household of Count Almadovar, but had been left in England after his recall, was empowered to make a direct, but clandestine, communication to ministers. Through the medium of a person who acted as a spy to both courts, information was conveyed to Mr. Cumberland, a gentleman well known in the literary world, who was the private secretary to Lord George Germaine, and through him it reached that minister and Lord North.

Dec. 5—29. A favourable conclusion of such a negotiation would have been highly satisfactory; and Mr. Hussey, with a credential letter from Lord George Germaine, went from London to Madrid. He was strictly enjoined not to sanction, in any way, the proposition of Commodore Johnstone relative to Gibraltar; but, in

1780. Jan. 29. the eager desire to prepare a way to peace, he seems to have exceeded the limits of his powers. At least, it is certain that Florida Blanca considered the cession of that fortress as an object attainable by treaty; for, after Mr. Hussey's return to London, he wrote him a letter,

denoting that as the direct object of the proposed arrangement*. In the course of their conversations at Madrid, the Spanish minister repelled, with great heat, the supposition that his court was restrained by any treaty from making peace without the participation of France. At his departing audience, the King of Spain expressed his entire approbation of the proceedings, and gave Mr. Hussey his benediction, charging him to return before the end of February, with peace.

Proposed cessions in exchange for Gibraltar. Rejected.

This attempt at negotiation had hitherto been entirely in the hands of Lord North and Lord George Germaine ; but, after Mr. Hussey's return, it was imparted to the cabinet, and four successive councils were dedicated to the discussion. It was observed that the importance of Gibraltar was so great, and the national pride so interested in retaining it, that no ministry could surrender it without stipulating for an equivalent; and it was proposed, but whether in the cabinet, or by separate communication to any of its members, does not appear, that to obtain this desired object, Spain should yield and guarantee to Great Britain the island of Porto Rico; the fortress and territory of Oran, with a harbour and land for the erection of a fortress in the adjacent bay; purchase all the artillery and stores left at Gibraltar, and pay in London two millions sterling, expended by Great Britain on the fortifications. Spain was also to renounce all engagements with France, by which she might be bound to take part in the present or any other war against England, to renew the treaty of Paris, in all particulars not affected by this arrangement, and engage not to assist the American insurgents, receive any ministers from them, or permit their ships to enter her ports; and if she could not assist his Majesty against them, she was to oblige all subjects of the King, who were deemed rebels, to depart from her dominions in a week after requisition made to that effect in his Majesty's name.

* Dated 2nd March, 1780. State Papers.

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1780. Rejected.

If it could have been supposed that, under any circumstances, the abandonment of Gibraltar could be made agreeable to the nation, the suggested equivalent was sufficiently large; but, far from such a project being acceded to, the result of the deliberations of the Council was, a meeting of the secretaries of state, with Mr. Hussey, at the house of Lord Hillsborough, at which ministers expressed the great readiness of the King to forget the unprovoked aggressions of Spain, and to cement and extend the connexion between the two countries by reciprocal cessions; but Gibraltar was peremptorily excluded from consideration. Far from favouring such an expectation, Lord Stormont (not without some vehemence of speech and action) declared to Mr. Hussey, "that, if Spain would lay be- "fore him the map of her empire to take his choice of "an equivalent, and three weeks to fix that choice, he "should not be able to find one*."

If, under other circumstances, this decisive mode of conduct might have been considered conclusive, it was not so on this occasion. Mr. Hussey made such a mitigated report to the Spanish minister as did not preclude all hopes; and the news of the defeat of Langara and the relief of Gibraltar gave additional motives for wishing to prolong the negotiation. Mr. Hussey, therefore, returned to Lisbon with Mr. Cumberland, who was directed to wait there for a communication from him, and accredited to conduct this delicate transaction. His instructions were, if he learnt from Mr. Hussey that the Court of Spain did not mean to enter into a negotiation but on the basis, or even in the expectation of a cession or exchange of Gibraltar or Minorca, he was to return from Lisbon without further correspondence, otherwise to proceed to Madrid.

May 31st. Mr. Cumberland goes to Madrid.

Mr. Hussey's letters, although not in all points explicit and satisfactory, were sufficient to induce Mr. Cumberland, under the advice of Mr. Walpole, the

* Copied from a memorandum written by Mr. Cumberland, found among the papers of Sir Stanier Porten, and published by Archdeacon Coxe in the Memoirs of the Kings of Spain, vol. i. p. 425.

British minister at Lisbon, to go to Madrid, being permitted to travel through Spain, under colour of intending to visit France for the benefit of his health. He took this resolution, not with any confident hope of ultimate success, nor without some apprehension arising from a want of precision in the communications of his clerical correspondent, but with the honest desire, as he expresses it, of giving the negotiation a chance.

June 18th. His hopes.

On his arrival at Madrid, he met with a kind and amicable reception; he found the nation anxious for peace; the court, the clergy, and the military professedly antigallican; and, in a letter to Lord Hillsborough, fairly detailed the grounds of his favourable and adverse anticipations. "The moment for detaching "Spain," he observed, "is now as favourable as ever; "she is still on the worst terms with France. The "King of Naples and the Queen of Portugal have "written pressingly to his Catholic Majesty to make "peace with England. A plan having been given in "by the Duc de Crillon for storming Gibraltar, the "King's confessor has expressly declared that, if such "orders are given, he will quit the court. On the opposite side we may place their unretrieved disgrace in "the relief of the garrison; their hopes in the grand "armament from Cadiz; their overrated successes in "West Florida, and their belief that the projected expeditions to the South American continent are relinquished, and that Sir Edward Hughes's condition "disables him from any enterprize against the Manillas. "Of Sir George Rodney," he added, "they think and "speak with reverence and dread. The American "minister, Mr. Jay, they hold at a distance, and have "given some harsh answers to the French ambassador "on his account: the bills of exchange drawn in Jay's "favour by Congress have been, one and all, sent "home unpaid*."

Against any amicable adjustment the whole force of French influence and intrigue was directed; all

* State Papers.

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was uncertainty and confusion; opinions varied widely; Mr. Hussey declared that Gibraltar would form no obstacle to a treaty, while Mr. Walpole confidently predicted the failure of the negotiation. At this period, the success of a pacific overture and the fortunes of two nations were materially affected by the acts of a senseless fanatic. Count d'Aranda, the Spanish Ambassador at Paris, forwarded to his own court a description of the late riots in the British metropolis. It speedily formed the topic of all conversation; some believed it as no less than an absolute rebellion, capable of overturning the throne and government; and the hatred displayed against the professors of the Romish religion had no small influence in the minds of the bigoted Spaniards. The frank and amicable manners before displayed by ministers were totally changed. Don Bernando Campio, the sub-minister, as Mr. Cumberland styles him, assumed an air of mystery, discouragement, and delay; while Count Florida Blanca, in a lamenting tone, pronounced the downfal of London, the ruin of King, ministers and government, and the rebellion of America transplanted to England. Authentic intelligence of the termination of the tumults was not sufficient to efface the impressions or eradicate the prejudices they had created, and which were enforced by the bigotry of the King's confessor and the councils of Don Joseph Galvez, minister of the Indies, an avowed partizan of France.

June 20. Effect of the riot in London.

Count D'Estaing, who was specially commissioned to leave his fleet for that purpose, repaired to Madrid, and, by persevering efforts, large promises, and with the aid of circumstances, gained an entire ascendancy overy Florida Blanca. Still the hope of final success was not extinct. Spain, however urged or solicited, had refused to enter into a treaty with America; the King declaring that he had too much the sentiments of a sovereign not to disapprove of the interference of France. The low estimation in which their navy was held was evident from the appointment of D'Estaing to command the Cadiz squadron, a measure extremely galling to the pride and punctilious feelings of Spanish

Efforts of France.

officers; the finances were in an exhausted state, the resources in the lowest condition; the effects of war were severely felt by all classes: heavy duties on foreign merchandizes, an enhancement of price on all articles of daily consumption, with its inevitable consequence, adulteration and fraud, produced not only discontent, but encouraged robbery and crimes, and the pressure was augmented by a succession of unfavourable seasons.

Further discussions on Gibraltar.

Count Florida Blanca made an indirect, probably hopeless, effort to effect a treaty in which the surrender of Gibraltar should form a preliminary. In this he proceeded with a caution clearly indicating a dread of ulterior responsibility. He delivered a paper to Mr. Hussey, which he was to copy; but in producing it, he was not to treat it as the composition of the minister, but only as his own memorandum of what he had collected in conversation. It stated that Spain was under no engagements to France beyond those which are usual between allied powers; she was bound to America by no treaty or promise; but thought that some mode ought to be devised in which neither England should be obliged to acknowledge American independence, nor France to appear inconsistent. On these points there were many more observations; but that most material to the actual business was in these terms: "Spain, in the course of human events, may "be reduced to the necessity of making peace with "Great Britain, without any stipulation relative to "Gibraltar; but such a peace can never be solid or "lasting without the sale, exchange, or compromise, "on some terms, of that fortress. Its recovery will "ever be sufficient to push the nation to a war; and "that favourite spot, it is presumed, can be of no use "to Great Britain, but that of holding an odious pos-"session within the territories of Spain. If that for-"tress is restored (and they will give high terms for it), "a lasting peace and amity will succeed, founded "on the natural interests of both nations." It was astonishing, the paper added, that Mr. Cumberland should be forbidden to confer on Gibraltar, when it

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was a point freely discussed in former treaties, and George the First even promised to surrender it. "The King thinks his honour engaged not to make "peace until he knows further relative to this point."

End of the Negotiation.

As Mr. Cumberland could not overstep the limits of his instructions, and the minister of Spain was holding frequent conferences with Mr. Jay, the American, Mr. Hussey was dispatched to London to make representations. Lord Hillsborough declared it evident, from the introduction of Gibraltar and America into the discussion, that there was no intention in the Court of Spain to make a separate peace; and he was right in his judgment, for when Mr. Hussey returned with the same propositions as before, Florida Blanca refused to receive him, declaring a firm resolution on the part of Spain not to enter upon any treaty, except in concert with France; and Mr. Cumberland was in consequence recalled*.

Observations.

This transaction is involved, from its nature, in a certain degree of mystery. It never assumed a regular form, not being confided to any accredited diplomatic agents; and, even with the British Government, it was not considered a cabinet measure; for, although it was not kept secret from any members of administration, Lord North and Lord George Germaine alone were intimately consulted, and their opinions did not exactly coincide: Lord George Germaine was not unwilling to allow that Gibraltar might be a subject of treaty, while Lord North told Mr. Hussey, whom he saw but once, that Gibraltar was a forbidden word, which must never pass his lips. It is possible that both the gentlemen employed, actuated by the hope of deriving honour from the title of peace-makers, may have disregarded, in some degree, the injunction imposed on them; but the failure of the attempt is not to be attributed to the ostensible cause alone. France had fortified her interest in the Spanish councils by magnificient promises of the exploits to be achieved by the Cadiz squadron, both in the West Indies and in Europe. Jamaica and Minorca

* Lord Hillsborough to Mr. Cumberland, 9th December, 1780.

were to be taken, and, with Gibraltar, restored to Spain. By these splendid promises apprehensions were stilled, hopes excited, and indecision fixed; present indignities and calamities were forgotten, and the Spaniards were aroused to determined action, while the French complained that, through their irresolution, and the separate negotiation, a whole campaign had been lost*. I feel pleasure in recording, that, although this attempt at peace was frustrated, the demonstrations of good-will and regard toward the King and the nation were never intermitted. Far from interposing any difficulties, the Spanish ministers made every proper arrangement for the exchange of prisoners, and expressed great satisfaction at our treatment of them. Expressions of kindness and presents were exchanged between the two monarchs; the King of Spain sending to our sovereign two beautiful horses of that country; and when, on the 4th of June, Mr. Cumberland entertained his friends in honour of King George's birth-day, the band of every regiment in Madrid met in his court-yard to celebrate the occasion.

Expectation of a neutral league.

In the course of the discussions with Mr. Cumberland, and more particularly in the manifesto when war was declared, Spain had intimated the formation of a league for the purpose of favouring the indirect operations of simulated neutrality, by impeding the right claimed by Great Britain, exercised very recently by Spain herself, and never abstained from by any power at war, of stopping and searching neutral ships, for the purpose of preventing the conveyance of ammunition, stores, and supplies to an enemy†. In order to a right understanding of this combination, and the manner in which it was brought about, it is necessary to review the transactions and motives of foreign courts during the late years.

Conduct and transactions of foreign powers. Prussia.

Of the deadly rancour cherished against England by the King of Prussia, enough has already been detailed; but the task of surmounting difficulties under

* For these transactions in general, see Cumberland's Memoirs, p. 304, et seqq. 4to.; Coxe's Kings of Spain, vol. iii. p. 72; and State Papers.

† See p. 44.

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which he laboured, through the distaste which was felt toward him by the Courts of Vienna and Petersburgh was at length alleviated, and finally surmounted, by the execution of the most unprincipled plan of tyrannical spoliation of which modern history had yet furnished a record, the partition of Poland. The powers benefited by this transaction were Germany, Russia, and Prussia. Aware of the censure which from all men endued with feelings of honour and justice must be showered on this nefarious conspiracy, all the parties severally disclaimed the origination of it. In fact they had all, by distinct declarations, acknowledged, and even by treaties bound themselves to sustain the right of the Crown of Poland to all the territories which it possessed*.

First partition of Poland.

Poland, forming a barrier between Austria, Prussia, Turkey, and Russia, had been the most considerable power in the north; but, from defects in its constitution, the weakness produced by an elective monarchy, the feuds engendered by a dominant though often servile nobility, religious differences carried to an unwarrantable excess of persecution and exclusion, and the facilities given to the machinations of foreign powers, whose influence was avowed, and whose aid was courted, it was become the most unstable and insignificant. To recount the events which laid this great and once powerful dominion at the mercy of the spoiler belongs to another department of history, and the task has been fully and ably accomplished. For the present purpose it may suffice to say, that on the death of King Augustus† several native nobles became candidates for the throne; the greater number of the Polish magnates favoured Count Branisky; but, under the influence of the Empress Catherine, Count Stanislaus Poniatowsky, who had been one of her favourites, obtained the prize, and was crowned by the name of Stanislaus Augustus. The Empress Maria Theresa had been the principal opponent of the new sovereign,

* Histoire des trois démembremens de Pologne, tom. i. p. 124.
† 5th October, 1769.

seconded by the insincere and inefficient assistance of France; but she retired reluctantly from the contest, unwilling to expose her country to the calamities which would have ensued from a conflict with Russia, Turkey, and Prussia.

The intrigues and arrangements necessary on this occasion brought the cabinets of Petersburgh and Berlin into more immediate and confidential intercourse than they had hitherto been, facilitated the disclosure of mutual views of aggrandizement, and enabled Frederick to establish a powerful influence in the mind of Catherine. Their designs were aided by Stanislaus, who, although he owed his elevation to a foreign power, dared to give offence by some acts, or rather attempts, which shewed that he had not foregone all principles of patriotism and independence, although his character and abilities were not equal to his great intents. For want of military talents, he could not direct or awe his turbulent subjects; and he was too deeply immersed in gallantry and pleasure to undertake important enterprizes. Troubles respecting religion, fomented by France, Prussia, and Russia, gave strength to a party, who, from their separation from the national church, were called dissidents; and who, by their numbers and the strength of their supporters, held a powerful sway in the state; the events of the war between Russia and the Porte encouraged Frederick to disclose and prosecute his plans. He coveted Polish or Western Russia, which formed a communication between the disjointed parts of his dominions. By artful representations, he subdued the not very formidable reluctance of the other powers to assist in his projects, accepting their portion of the spoil. At length, the final treaty of partition was signed at St. Petersburgh*; and, after some delay, rendered necessary by circumstances of the times, carried into effect. A manifesto was issued by the three powers, setting forth their claims; and the districts which they allotted to themselves were occupied

* 5th of August, 1772.

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by their troops; no military resistance could be feared, for, by the force of faction, the King was, in effect, a state prisoner at Warsaw, his person protected, and the slight semblance of authority allotted to him preserved only by a Russian guard. A diet was assembled* for the consummation of this act of national disgrace, the surrender of a portion of the kingdom to foreigners; the majority of the lower House opposed the dismemberment, and they were encouraged by the King, who declared he would rather suffer the amputation of his right hand than sign the act; but the enthusiasm of the moment was not sustained by a corresponding vigour of character: he had not the spirit to renounce a crown held only by the sufferance of his oppressors; he shrunk before the menaces of the Russian ambassador; and, alarmed for the fate of his family, executed an instrument which was the present curse, and produced the final extinction of his country. Still apprehensive of further resistance from the diet, the partitioning powers procured its dissolution and the appointment of a committee of delegates, by whom, in September, every arrangement was made, and the treaty concluded, in conformity to the dictates of the three Courts.

Russia acquired Polish Livonia, part of the palatinates of Witepsk, Polotsk, and Minsk, and the whole palatinate of Micislaw, containing a population of 1,500,000 souls. Prussia obtained the district called Royal or Western Russia, with 860,000 persons. The Empress, Maria Theresa, assuming credit for much moderation, took possession of a large domain in the South of Poland, comprising Red Russia, Gallicia, and parts of the palatinates of Cracow, Sandomir, Lublin, Bezk, Volhynia, and Podolia, containing a fertile and extensive country, with 2,500,000 inhabitants, and the valuable salt-works of Vielitzka, and annexed the whole to the Austrian empire, under the ancient appellation of the kingdom of Gallicia and Lodomeria. The merciless oppressors ground their new subjects by

* 19th of April, 1773.

rigorous acts of extortion; and, anticipating future attempts, took care to perpetuate every abuse in the existing constitution, and to prevent, as far as they could, all hopes and means of future amelioration*. Nor were the unhappy people permitted to expect that they should long retain even their reduced dominion. Incroachments were frequently made; antiquated maps, by forgotten geographers, were produced to prove that the boundaries of the acquired countries were not, in recent times, accurately defined; and Prussia maintained, without disguise, projects for acquiring the entire possession of Dantzick, which, as well as Thorn, was excepted from his portion of the partition. Although tranquillity appeared to reign, yet further important events were expected: the country, straitened in her commerce, and drained of her coin, was incapable of remaining in her present situation, and a general partition was viewed as a catastrophe not far remote. Such a probability was increased by the state of the people. They regarded the King as the immediate cause and even instrument of their disgrace, dishonour, and misfortunes. Beside this extinction of loyalty, there was a general want of virtue and honour, and even of the appearance of them, a corruption and open perversion of justice; the great places were all so badly filled that the national dignity was lost; and although the words Liberty and Patriotism were in frequent use, a less portion of those qualities never existed among a civilized people†.

* In this statement, I have principally followed Mr. Archdeacon Coxe's History of the House of Austria, vol. iii. c. 40, not without consulting the authorities he has cited, and many others, particularly the Travels of the same learned author in Poland, vol. i. p. 1 to 176. Histoire des trois démembremens de Pologne, tom. i. liv. 1er au 7me.

† Letter from Sir Thomas Wroughton to Lord Suffolk, 8th of March, 1777. A specimen of the means by which the country was impoverished and the national spirit broken, is given by the same minister in a letter to the Secretary of State, five years before. The King of Prussia demands from the people quantities of corn, forage, and other necessaries, greater than the country could possibly produce in three or four years. On the inhabitants declaring their inability to comply, they have a military execution, and are, at last, obliged to purchase from the Prussians themselves, at an exorbitant price, with good money, and resell it to them at a very low one, which they are paid in an adulterated coin of not half its nominal value. Gentlemen of good condition were compulsorily enrolled as common soldiers; and the lower classes of the community were encouraged to make pretensions which their superiors were always obliged to compromise, under the severest and most wanton treatment. State Papers.

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In these distressing circumstances, it was naturally to be expected that the people of Poland should request the intervention of some foreign powers; but, hemmed in as they were, what nation could have afforded them assistance? France was, underhand, fomenting the troubles of the country; the commercial powers were not applied to until the progress of events had rendered their interposition useless; the King of Prussia had announced that he would not permit the mediation of any state between himself and Dantzick; and a declaration of war, if circumstances would have justified it, could not have produced any benefit to Poland. The correspondence between the Sovereigns of Russia and Prussia had been conducted with the utmost secrecy, not by ministers, but by letters in their own hand-writing. The official communications to the British minister, when the Prussians made their hostile appearance, were general, ambiguous, and unsatisfactory*. The King of Poland applied for aid in earnest terms of supplication: England, he said, was not bound to assist him by any treaty, but by that which was paramount to all treaties—the law of humanity. Had Stanislaus been of a character to render the efforts of Great Britain in his behalf of any avail, they could not, with any propriety, have been offered, except in the form of influence with the partitioning powers; but, however deeply and sincerely the cause of this unhappy nation was felt, time, distance, and treaties equally forbad the effort. Russia was entirely under the sway of the King of Prussia; and the Empress-Queen, although the last to accede to the iniquitous project, was so largely gratified in the division of the booty, that no separate exertion could be expected from her. England was thus obliged quietly to see the accomplishment of an act against which every honourable mind must have felt the deepest abhorrence. The King's sentiments on the subject were sufficiently apparent in the cool, almost scornful, terms in which he acknowledged the communication of the

* August, 1770.

joint manifesto. "The King is willing to suppose "that the three Courts are convinced of the justice of "their respective pretensions, although his Majesty is "not informed of the motives of their conduct*."

Conduct of Russia.

During the progress of this transaction, the King of Prussia acquired an influence in the councils of Petersburgh, the duration of which was questionable; but, while it subsisted, it was certain that it would be exercised to the injury of Great Britain. Of this feeling and its effects, instances have already been given, particularly in the negotiation for a military aid in America. After the declaration of independence by that country, he affected, for a time, to discountenance their cause, refused to acknowledge or receive two agents, Lee and Sayre, who were empowered by Congress to negotiate for officers to aid their arms, and for a commercial treaty, by which the broad cloth of Silesia was to be exchanged for the tobacco of Virginia. At this period, Frederick not only disavowed the rebels, but gave every assurance to the British ambassador of sincere friendship and good-will; and, as a proof, permitted the auxiliary troops, raised in different parts of Germany, to pass freely through his dominions, without question from the Custom House, or any other obstruction.

Yet, in the midst of all these shews of justice, and pretences of amity, he was, in his own hand-writing, maintaining a correspondence with Dr. Franklin, who was also in high estimation with Prince Henry; urging the Court of Versailles to espouse openly the American cause, predicting the certain and speedy bankruptcy of England, and permitting, like other countries, the contraband supply of stores and ammunition to our enemies†. His permission of the passage

* 2nd of October, 1772. This and other particulars are derived from the communications of ambassadors, and the answers to them in the State Papers.

† In a letter to Lord Suffolk, 2nd of December, 1777, Sir Robert Murray Keith gives the following information: "Prince Kaunitz, with injunctions of in- "violable secrecy, said, 'Tell Lord Suffolk from me that the King of Prussia "'persists in his insidious plan, and even adds, if possible, a greater degree of "'rancorous zeal to his cruel instigations at Paris. I speak to you as far down "'as the very last letters I had from that capital. His minister continues to "'enforce every argument: the indispensable duty which he pretends to be in-

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of troops was sometimes capriciously and haughtily withdrawn, to the great inconvenience of the service; at other times, it was granted with expressions of friendship too much at variance with his general conduct and declarations ever to deceive. As the events of war opened new prospects, his hatred became more unreserved; and, although the people of Prussia retained in general a strong partiality for England, and a desire to see her cause prosper, their King formed a strict union with France, engaged to injure us in every quarter, and advised our enemy, as the best means of distressing us, to foment a rebellion in Ireland*.

Denmark.

Denmark exhibited a miserable spectacle of a frail government and an imbecile sovereign. Since the banishment of Caroline Matilda†, the King, too feeble in his intellects to act in any affair of state, relinquished the royal supremacy to the Queen-mother, an ambitious and designing woman, whose projects are

" ' cumbent on the French government to seize the present happy moment for a " ' rupture with their formidable rival. He says that ages may never offer so " ' favourable a crisis, and that to let it slip would be the most unpardonable " ' blunder of modern politics. After preaching this abominable doctrine to the " ' ministers of France, as servants of the Crown, he next applies to their pas- " ' sions as men, telling them loudly that their fame and honour in the estimation " ' of the present age depend on their resolution at this moment, and that, if they " ' neglect their present advantages over England, the succeeding generations of " ' Frenchmen will mark them with indelible reproach, and lay at their doors the " ' dishonour, not only of short-sightedness, but even of pusillanimity. If I " ' were under the obligation of finding a motive for the conduct of his Prussian " ' Majesty toward England, I should not look for it either in the path of sagacious " ' foresight, or of sound policy. It is in the personal character of the man; his " ' temper, his solitary moroseness, his dislike of mankind, his habitual con- " ' tempt of moral piety, his decline of health, which he increases by endeavour- " ' ing to conceal it, and in his private and irreconcileable enmities. I should " ' not be able to point out a real object which might tempt him to adopt this in- " ' sidious conduct; but, as I told you formerly, it is in his character to believe " ' that, in the midst of a general combustion, he may find the means of purloin- " ' ing something for his own advantage!' " In his next dispatch (December the 3rd), the ambassador says, "The motive of Prince Kaunitz's confidence may " be traced to the inveterate hatred subsisting between the Courts of Vienna and " Berlin; yet I am persuaded that, in giving the earliest notice of the dangerous " machinations of his Prussian Majesty, he had it still more at heart to render an " acceptable service to Great Britain than to expose the malignity of Frederick. " His deep-rooted ill-will to Great Britain, and want of attachment to the King, " which he is very free in expressing, arise from an opinion that the late Princess- " Dowager of Wales was unfriendly to him, and influenced the King in the con- " clusion of the last war." (22nd of February, 1778.) State Papers.

* Sir James Harris to Lord Stormont, 8th of April, 1780, and other documents in the State Paper Office.

† Vol. i, p. 522.

said to have embraced the dethronement of her husband, the exclusion of his children, and the usurpation of the crown by his younger brother. Under her, the weak and disjointed condition of the Danish ministry rendered it contemptible in the eyes of all Europe*.

In what more particularly interested Great Britain, Denmark, like other neutral nations, availed herself of the opportunity of carrying on a contraband commerce with the revolted colonies; she was favoured by the possession of St. Croix, a small island in the West Indies, to which consignments of military stores were made by American agents, where their flag was honoured, and where, notwithstanding remonstrances, numerous irregularities prevailed. Too feeble to justify an attack, too poor to present any hopes of an indemnity, an attempt was made† to induce Denmark to arm a fleet and declare in favour of Great Britain; but the Danes set too high a price on their compliance. They asked a present sum of 40,000*l.*, an annual subsidy to the same amount, to be continued ten years after a peace, and the gift and guaranty of some territory, such as Crab Island, as an indemnity. The advancing and maintaining of these terms probably arose from the interference of France, the minister from that country opposing Mr. Eden with large and flattering proposals‡.

Sweden.

Sweden exhibited also the picture of a poor and venal government, although in point of strength it was not inconsiderable. A known and ascertained sum would purchase a majority in the diet, and this had been managed by France, until Great Britain, with Denmark and Russia, formed an influence, by distributing 8000*l.* a year among some principal individuals, to counteract the plans of France and Prussia.

* As an instance of the tyranny and malignity of this woman, it may be mentioned that when (May 1774) the intelligence of the decease of the persecuted Queen arrived, mourning was ordered for the children; but the royal family appeared on the same day at the theatre, and there was afterward a ball in dominos. The King, evidently constrained, was among the dancers; but at court he was so much affected as to alarm the foreign ministers who had occasion to approach him.

† State Papers, 8th January, 1780. ‡ Ib. from 1772 to July 1780.

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By this timely donation they secured the neutrality at least, if not the co-operation, of a state which could bring into the field 40,000 effective men, and possessed Gottenburg, the port in the north best suited to privateers. In 1771, Gustavus the Third ascended the throne, on the demise of his father, Adolphus Frederick, and, after some struggles, in which he conducted himself with great prudence, succeeded in effecting a change in the constitution, which established his authority and gave efficiency to the different orders of the state, but which, it was supposed, would also afford additional strength to the French party. It was effected, after a slight failure, by a coup de main, during a period of perfect tranquillity; the plan was communicated to, and approved by d'Aiguillon, and De Vergennes distributed 600,000 francs (25,000*l.*) to support it. Contrary to these expectations, the King did not shew any decided partiality for France; but, amidst the embarrassments occasioned by a defective revenue, and the anxieties arising from foreign and domestic intrigues, he maintained a friendly regard toward Great Britain, expressed strong disapprobation of the conduct of France, and resisted all efforts to establish a contraband trade with America; prohibiting the reception of their privateers in his ports, and the exportation of military stores for their use. Whether or not the French party made use of these circumstances to inflame the people, or the genuine feeling was adverse to the measures of the King, he was, at this period (January 1780), extremely unpopular. Discontent generally prevailed: apprehensions for the safety of his person were entertained; he was obliged to abstain from meeting an assembly at the exchange, was insulted at the opera-house, and, as if he had a mind prescient of the future, he discontinued masquerades*.

Holland.

The time was now arrived when Great Britain was to rank Holland, her ancient, and it might be thought inseparable, ally, among her declared enemies. Every

* State Papers, 1771 to 1780; Coxe's Travels in Poland, &c. vol. iv. p. 39, et seq.

motive arising from long and benefical connexion, similarity in religion and political interests, combined to deter the Dutch people from the adoption of a course of conduct adverse to England; but a faction, devoted to France and inimical to the Stadtholder, influenced the proceedings of government. The existence and power of this party began to be felt at the conclusion of the last war*, when our troops were not, without much difficulty, and an express convention, permitted to pass through the territories of the republic, to reimbark for their native shore. M. De Breteuil, the French Ambassador, forwarded the views of the faction by many acts of petulance and insolence toward the Stadtholder. Even after his marriage, in 1767, with the Princess Wilhelmina, niece of the King of Prussia, de Breteuil, far from abating, increased his intemperance and misbehaviour, converting a point of courtly etiquette into a political conflict, and attacking the conduct and character of Sir Joseph Yorke, the British Ambassador, with virulence and rancour; but the calm dignity and unvaried prudence and judgment of the distinguished person whom he thought proper to assail, precluded all chance of his obtaining any advantage. The conduct of both ambassadors was approved by their respective courts†.

In the anti-stadtholderian faction, the patriots (for so they styled themselves) of Amsterdam bore a conspicuous part; and by their influence the whole body was kept alive, supported, and strengthened. The Prince of Orange, unmoved by these efforts, in the midst of the agitation occasioned by the partition of Poland, the revolution in Sweden‡, and many other public events, continued firm in his desire to form a connexion with the King of England, and declared that he should always be ready to exert himself for

* In 1762.

† In 1768 and 1769. The particulars of De Breteuil's proceedings, if not sufficiently important for the page of history, are yet possessed of an interesting curiosity which entitles them to a place in the Appendix, where an account of them, extracted from the dispatches of the English Ambassador, is given.

‡ In 1772.

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that salutary purpose; but his good intentions were rendered ineffectual by indolence of habit and passiveness of character.

Before the commencement of our conflict with America, the Dutch had been conspicuously active in contraband commerce. The greater portion of that in the Isle of Man was in their hands; an extensive trade in tea and various other commodities was carried on with our colonies in America, and all endeavours to prevent it proved ineffectual; being met and evaded by incessant contrivances, tricks, and chicane.

Conduct of Holland.

When the struggle with America assumed a more decided appearance, although the Stadtholder still persevered in his demonstrations of friendship, the States-General gave many signs of hostility. They raised obstacles to the passage over their territory of the troops which we had subsidized from Nassau, and behaved in a manner still more unfriendly with respect to a body of his Majesty's subjects in their service, called the Scotch brigade. Without giving up the right which he had to this corps, by virtue of their allegiance, the King asked for the loan of so many as were fit for service*. The request was parried by allegations that they were wanted for defence of the Dutch frontier; delayed by protracted discussions; evaded by a futile proposal, that an equal number of Hanoverians should be substituted, and the service of the troops limited, to the exclusion of America. Offers were made to pay levy-money for an equal number of men to be raised for the service, and in the dominions of Holland, and that the brigade should be at liberty to raise recruits in Scotland, so as to return in undiminished force. It would have been difficult, with any shew of propriety, to reject these proposals; but discussions were protracted until compliance would have been useless, and Sir Joseph Yorke was directed no longer to press the application†.

* October, 1775.

† Documents in the State Paper Office in 1775. By what means and by what influence the interests of England, although supported by the Stadtholder, were counteracted, may be gathered from the following fact. "In the course of "the discussion, Baron Van der Capellen, Member of the Corps of Nobles of

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1780. Motives of the Dutch.

Many concurrent circumstances demonstrated the evil disposition of the Dutch, the self-styled patriots at least, to injure and incense Great Britain. The manner of receiving the application for the Scotch brigade, of answering the complaints on contraband commerce with America, and particularly with respect to the conduct of the Governor of St. Eustatia, afforded full proof that the Dutch were anxious to share the spoils of England, and to increase their own trade at our expense. In their public actions, the cause of America was represented as similar to that of the Low Countries, and their own, at antecedent periods. Still, while no power in Europe acknowledged the Americans, they were obliged to content themselves with the profits of an illicit traffic. In Europe, this commerce was little restrained; but in the West Indies it was more than tolerated,—it was honoured. American agents were received and countenanced in Holland; and St. Eustatia, hitherto a barren and useless property, was suddenly elevated into population, wealth, and importance, by becoming the deposit in which stores of every kind were received for the Americans, and retained for their use. These circumstances occasioned a long correspondence, which terminated in the delivery of a spirited memorial by Sir Joseph Yorke, complaining of the attentions paid by the Governor of St. Eustatia to vessels under the American flag*, and his refusal to

1777. February 21st. First memorial of Sir Joseph Yorke.

" the Province of Overyssel, wrote and published an opinion and protest, con-
" taining, among others, the following observations. The fire which burns in
" America is very capable of setting in flames all Europe, which is already but
" too full of combustibles. Has assistance been offered to his Britannic Majesty,
" it will not be wanting from another quarter to the Americans. English great-
" ness (towards the raising of which we have sacrificed our own welfare without
" any advantageous return, and whereby the balance of Europe, which has cost
" such torrents of blood and treasure, is so entirely broken, exercises on the sea
" a more formidable monarchy than we have ever seen) is not beheld with indif-
" ference by the House of Bourbon, and all those who wish the liberty of Europe
" and of commerce. It is more than probable that they will avail themselves of
" a suitable occasion to strike a surer blow. And what then will be the conse-
" quences?—No other than to find ourselves, as heretofore, involved in a des-
" tructive war with one of our most powerful neighbours, who by a reciprocity
" of interest is our natural friend, and who cannot but wish the perpetual exist-
" ence of such a neutral republic as this, which, flourishing by commerce, fur-
" nished with a sufficient number of ships, and a competent naval force to pro-
" tect them in time of war, may carry on their otherwise obstructed trade and
" navigation with mutual advantages."

* The word *corsair* in the original has been uniformly translated *pirate*; but its meaning includes that of *privateer*.

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redress the complaints of the Council of St. Christopher's. He required a formal disavowal of the salute, by Fort Orange, in St. Eustatia, to a rebel ship, and the recall of the Governor, Van Graaf. The States-General were charged with duplicity and violation of treaties; and informed that, unless the required satisfaction was given, the King would not be amused with mere assurances, or delay the adoption of measures due to the interests and dignity of his Crown. The States-General, in an humble and complying answer, denied any intention to recognize the independence of America, and consented to recall Van Graaf: but they complained of the harsh terms in the memorial; and, as a mark of indignation, ordered Count Welderen, their envoy extraordinary in London, not to correspond on the occasion with Sir Joseph Yorke or Lord Suffolk, but to deliver his memorial to the King in person.

When France had thrown off the mask, she strongly urged the United Provinces to break their connexion with England, and, had Spain declared immediately, would have added threats to promises; but underhand contrivances effected the design. Franklin appealed to the cupidity of the States, by representing America as a young virgin with a small fortune as yet, but which was likely to be worth a great deal in time, to the lover who would pay assiduous court to her. The British ambassador used the best means he had to counteract these attempts; but his efforts were obstructed by the want of concert and union in the Stadtholder's party, and of firmness in the Prince. Although apprized of the intrigues and designs of his opponents, he made no effort to stem the torrent, but contented himself with promising to negative or reject measures which might be improperly proposed; while the activity and energy of the representatives of Amsterdam drew after them those of Dort, Haarlem, Leyden, and other principal towns. "It may be asked," Sir Joseph Yorke observes, "from whence arises this change in "the conduct of the Republic from former times? I "answer, Religion; the fear of France; the union of

"the Barrier Treaty; and an habitual and intimate "intercourse in political affairs, which has subsisted "between this republic and England ever since the "Revolution, kept the two countries united till the "peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, in 1748. Religion has lost "its relish throughout Europe. Since the last war, "France has ceased to be an object of fear. The "Barrier Treaty is annihilated, and, from the moment "that we were left by Austria, and joined Russia, "there has been no intimate concert or connexion "between us and the Republic. We have gone on "alone and prosperously without their assistance, "which has excited their jealousy, and they have pro-"fited by an unarmed neutrality which has strength-"ened their cupidity. Their politics are bounded to "money-getting; and, although they have too deep a "stake in our existence to wish us bankrupts, they "would not be sorry to share in the freedom of our "American trade*."

Memorials of the Dutch merchants.

Such was the correct and sagacious view of affairs taken by a wise and experienced statesman; and a short interval proved its correctness. For a time, a sullen civility was openly maintained; but in secret a compact was signed with the American states, acknowledging their independence, and treating with them on that footing. The trade openly maintained, in contraband articles to the French coast, having occasioned the seizure of several Dutch ships, three angry memorials were presented to the States-general by Dutch merchants; and Count Welderen made complaints to the British court, not only of interruptions of commerce in the European, but in the American seas. The answer of the Secretary of State set forth, in mild language, the unprovoked aggression of France; from the suddenness of the event, and the necessity of restraining the exertions of that crafty power, too great rigour might have been undesignedly exercised in arresting neutral vessels; but if any car-

12th Sept.

19th Oct.

* Sir Joseph Yorke to Lord Suffolk, 20th of August, 1778.

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goes, not contraband, had been seized by his Majesty's cruisers, ample indemnification should be made.

1778. Second memorial of Sir Joseph Yorke.

Sir Joseph Yorke, thoroughly acquainted with the state and temper of parties, the preponderance of French interest, and the fatal supineness of the Stadtholder, vindicated, in an able memorial, the conduct of Great Britain; and, while he displayed the moderation of the King in not plunging Holland into a war, by demanding the succours stipulated in the treaties of 1678 and 1716, proposed to discuss the grievances in a conference, prefacing the offer with an assurance that the prevention of contraband trade should, in the mean time, be subject to no interpretation unwarranted by the rules of equity and the practice of perfect generosity.

23rd Nov.

8th Dec. Exertions of the French party.

This proposal occasioned violent exertions among the French party; the Duke De Vauguyon, ambassador from the court of Versailles, endeavoured to pique the pride and cupidity of the Dutch, by demanding a clear and explicit determination to accept or renounce the advantages of commerce proffered by a decree of the French council of state, allowing the traffic in naval stores during the war. The proposition was not accepted; and the French court repealed the permission given to Holland of trading with them duty free, admitting to the exclusive enjoyment of this privilege, Amsterdam alone, "in consideration of "the patriotic exertions made by that city to persuade "the republic to procure from the court of London "the security of that unlimited commerce which "belonged to the Dutch flag*." Sir Joseph Yorke did not fail to repel the calumnies advanced in these papers; he exposed the dictatorial tone assumed by France in prescribing a mode of conduct to be maintained by the States-General toward England, and animadverted, with proper severity, on the attempt to make distinctions between the different members of

14th Jan. 1779.

9th April.

* This favour was afterward extended to Haarlem, and subsequently to the whole province of Holland.

the same republic, so repugnant to the union and independence of the States-General.

1779.

The arts and influence of France were more effectual than the remonstrances of England; and when Spain was added to the hostile combination, the striking partiality of Holland toward our enemies rendered more decisive explanations indispensable. Sir Joseph Yorke, therefore, in pursuance of instructions, demanded the succours stipulated in the several treaties, of which the *casus fœderis* was fully explained in the separate article of 1716. This memorial descanted on the unjust proceedings of France and Spain, and their threat of invasion, and declared that the moment was arrived to decide whether Great Britain, who had spilt so much blood and expended so much treasure to succour others and maintain liberty and religion, was to be abandoned by her most ancient friends and allies, and left unprotected, except by her own courage and internal strength, to contend against the ambitious House of Bourbon, who endeavoured to crush all, for the purpose of reigning over all. The States were reminded of a truth, which they appeared too fatally to have forgotten, that their history contained little more than a detail of dangers successively created by the ambition of France, and that their best days began with their union with England.

Succours demanded by England.

22nd July.

While the government of Holland evaded giving a definitive answer to this demand, the advocates of the British and French connexions maintained a strenuous paper war. The people, in spite of the allurements with which France endeavoured to bias their judgment, did not relinquish their partiality for English alliance; and the Stadtholder remained firm in the same cause: but the increasing strength of the hostile confederacy, and the insults offered to the British coast during the summer of 1779, gave additional spirits to the French faction, and encouraged them to represent Sir Joseph Yorke's demand as an indication of national weakness and despondency.

At this juncture, a fresh cause of dispute arose, in

October.

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consequence of the reception afforded to Paul Jones and his prizes in the harbours of the republic. Our ambassador demanded the detention of the ships and crews; as Jones, though a pretended American, was a native of Scotland, a pirate, rebel, and state criminal. The States-General refused compliance, alleging their constant maxim not to decide on the legality of captures by the vessels of any other country; they only opened their ports to afford shelter from storms or disasters, but would compel them to put to sea again, without unloading or disposing of their cargoes. In vain did Sir Joseph, in a new memorial, appeal to the rules of equity, and the express stipulations of treaties; the Dutch remained inflexible, and in a short answer reiterated their former opinions.

Dispute respecting Paul Jones.

25th Oct.

20th.

Great Britain, on the faith and fair construction of treaties, had a right, in case of war with the House of Bourbon, to call on the Dutch, as allies, for active aid; every demand of that kind was obstinately resisted; neutrality was the utmost extent of their profession, and even that was attended with indications of partiality amounting to hostility. Yet the government of Holland claimed, and were allowed, all the advantages arising from treaties of alliance, and expected protection in a commerce calculated to raise the naval power of the enemy, and depress the interest of this country. To terminate this disgraceful state of suspense between alliance and hostility, the British ambassador again pressed for the succours stipulated by treaties. The Dutch not only refused the demand, but, renewing their complaints on the interruption of trade, announced their intention of appointing a convoy with their next fleet to the coast of France. The English ministry, having ineffectually remonstrated against this unfriendly resolution, encountered its effects with becoming vigour and spirit. A fleet, bound for the Mediterranean, under the convoy of Count Byland, was met by a British squadron, under Commodore Fielding: the Dutch fired on the boats which were approaching to search their vessels; and their Admiral answered a shot a-head from the British

26th Nov. Succours refused.

1st January 1780. Engagement between Commodore Fielding and Count Byland.

Commodore by a broadside. This act of hostility being returned, Byland struck his colours: the greater part of the convoy escaped; but the few which were captured afforded sufficient proof of the contraband commerce to which the Dutch thus gave countenance and protection. Count Byland accepted permission to hoist his colours; but, refusing to return to his own coast, accompanied the British commander to Spithead.

Remonstrance on the subject.

The event furnished grounds for numerous complaints; the British cabinet justified their proceeding, and Lord Stormont strenuously remonstrated with Count Welderen on the tameness with which his government permitted all the regards due to ancient amity with England to be sacrificed to the cupidity of individuals, or the pitiful artifices of cabal and intrigue. As the most friendly method of disclosing the sentiments of the British Court, the secretary of state announced, by a *declaration verbale*, that if the Dutch persisted, not only in refusing the aids stipulated by treaties, but in assisting the enemy with naval stores, they could no longer be allowed the benefits of an alliance which they deserted by changing it into a neutrality, and that too in the midst of a war maintained by the house of Bourbon for the destruction of Great Britain, which could never be effected without the ruin of the Republic.

28th Jan.

21st March.

After allowing nearly two months for the discussion of this official declaration, Sir Joseph Yorke again addressed a memorial to the States-General, recapitulating all the facts he had formerly urged, complaining of the hostile conduct of Count Byland toward the boats of His Majesty's fleet, and of their injustice in prohibiting the export of provisions for the use of the garrison of Gibraltar, while they were so eager and vindictive in conveying ammunition and stores to Spain, which had disturbed their trade in a wanton and unprecedented manner. If the Dutch, by their own act, ceased to be allies, they could have no connexion with England, but such as subsisted between neutral powers in a state of amity; all treaties were

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1780.

reciprocal; and therefore, unless the Dutch, within three weeks, gave a satisfactory answer to the demand of succours made eight months before, their conduct would be considered as a breach of alliance, the effect of treaties suspended, and the same system observed toward them, as toward other neutral and unprivileged states. To this declaration an evasive provisional answer was given, importing, that it was impossible to consult the several states of the republic, so as to procure an answer in three weeks. But procrastination was now no longer allowed: the court of Great Britain, at the expiration of the appointed term, declared the provisional suspension of all particular stipulations respecting the freedom of navigation and commerce in time of war, particularly those contained in the marine treaty of 1674*.

17th April.

Formation of the armed neutrality.

The unfriendly conduct of Holland was encouraged by a most extraordinary compact formed at this period in the north of Europe, and known by the name of the armed neutrality. The principle which this confederacy was formed to support is expressed by a short proverbial sentence: "Free bottoms, free goods." The pretension was not new; it had, in distant times, formed the subject of discussions and been adverted to in treaties; it had been disallowed by the best civilians, although generally claimed by powers who were desirous to profit as indirect assistants of belligerent states, when they had neither strength nor spirit sufficient to enable them to give effectual aid in open war. In late years it had been occasionally advanced; but never, till this period, had the maintenance of it formed the subject of an armed alliance or confederacy. When a war with Spain, on the subject of Falkland's Islands, was expected, the French party in Holland succeeded in making an arrangement, which the Stadtholderian party was not sufficiently daring to oppose, by which France, Germany, Prussia, and Holland,

* For these facts I have consulted the state papers, which are published according to their date in the Annual Register and Remembrancer; many pamphlets published in Holland, on both sides of the question, and the correspondence preserved in the State Paper Office.

were to unite in protecting their neutrality. The intent is rendered obvious by the share which France took in the transaction, and by the close concealment of it, at the time, from the knowledge of the British minister*. Denmark had acceded to the same proposition, and did not affect altogether to conceal a treaty by which it was to be sustained†. When our contest with America rendered additional vigilance, with respect to contraband trade, indispensable, orders were issued, and communicated to the Court of Copenhagen, for intercepting all military supplies in Europe, or in the West Indies; but the desire of gain, and the activity of Mr. Sayre, bad as were his repute and credit, enabled the traders of Denmark to make the forbidden consignments from Altona and other ports‡. As the progress of the war, and the part taken in it by the French produced new incidents and new combinations, the Danes assumed a more decisive position. Their minister, Count Bernstorff, in a conference with the British ambassador§, adopted a tone not used before. He expressed surprise that some Danish ships which had been seized were not released, and complained that the advantages allowed to the Dutch were not extended to his country, which was much more entitled to them, having omitted no opportunity of shewing attachment to Great Britain. The principle of "free ships, free goods" had never been formally contested, and Denmark would continue to insist on it as part of the law of nations. It could not be injurious to England, he observed, to let other nations share with the Dutch in the profits of the French coasting-trade; but, on the contrary, would make friends of the northern powers, and dispel those clouds which he saw were gathering from the anger of the King of Prussia and the resentment of Sweden, through which the latter power had resolved to arm, and had proposed to Denmark to form a concert‖.

* Sir Joseph Yorke to Lord Halifax, 9th of April, 1771.
† Sir Robert Murray Keith to Lord Stormont, 15th of October, 1771.
‡ Same correspondence in 1775 and 1777.
§ 25th of November, 1778.
‖ Mr. Delaval to Lord Suffolk, 20th of November, 1778.

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1780. Conduct of the Empress of Russia.

With whatever intentions this information might be given, whether with a view to impart useful intelligence, or to distract the British Government by the apprehension of new enemies, the uncertainty of rights, and the discussion of captious and unusual claims, it was founded on truth, and displayed a real state of combinations and intrigues. The policy of France and the restless animosity of the King of Prussia were employed in perfecting a combination which they hoped would be fatal to the prosperity of England. To give decisive success to their plot, it was necessary that the Empress of Russia should be induced to become the head of the confederacy. In this endeavour, the party were strenuously aided by Count Panin, the Russian Prime Minister, who was entirely at the command of Prussia, resolutely adverse to Great Britain, and, in the same degree, devoted to France; but his efforts were in some degree impeded by the attachment of Catherine to England, which was weakened, but not destroyed, by events and insinuations. She professed this sentiment on all occasions; and if she did not approve of all the acts of our ministers, she felt our rights, and sympathized in the oppressions and indignities to which we were subjected. In a conversation with Sir James Harris, she regretted that we had not been able to stop the American contest in the beginning, and suggested the possibility of restoring peace, by renouncing our struggle with the colonies; but, when the ambassador asked whether, if they belonged to her, and a foreign power were to propose peace on such terms, she would accept it?—"No," she replied; "I would rather lose my head on "the scaffold*!"

But, whatever might be the internal feelings of Catherine, her conduct was no longer to be relied on. She was swayed by her minister, Panin, and governed by her favorite, Potemkin. Thoroughly acquainted with her weaknesses, her desires and her passions, he operated on, and guided them at his pleasure. The Empress was more inclined perhaps to English than

* Sir James Harris to Lord Weymouth, 20th of September, 1779.

to Prussian councils; but Frederick had superior opportunities, and availed himself of them in a manner which would have been reprobated in the representatives of Great Britain. He was anxious to reconcile Russia to France; Panin was favourable to his views; but Potemkin, intent on raising an empire in the East, was neither inclined to Prussia nor France*. To serve the cause to which he had devoted himself, Panin, with simulated kindness and friendship, observed to Sir James Harris, that he was obliged to express her imperial majesty's wishes that we would use a little more circumspection in our proceedings toward ships of neutral nations, or we should irritate them, although they were as yet well disposed toward us. Denmark, Sweden, and Holland, he said, had solicited her to join in a representation, and she could not, with indifference, see the commerce of the North molested as it was by our privateers. He spoke of our vague and uncertain description of naval and warlike stores, and required an exact definition of them. The ambassador answered that our conduct was founded on principles of justice, and in strict conformity with usage on former occasions. As to a definition, he said, it was clearly given in treaties; in which, after "ships, sailors, and gunpowder, it was added, *aut ulla* "*alia ad bellum faciendum necessaria, cujuscunque* "*generis, aut conditionis fuerint*†."

Means were found to aid the efforts of Panin, and give the desired impulse to the mind of his sovereign. Influenced by French counsels, the Spaniards, under pretence of blockading Gibraltar, had prevented all Russian vessels from entering the Mediterranean. The Empress's resentment on this occasion, aided by her strong disapprobation of the treatment encountered by Count Byland, enabled the King of Prussia to inculcate maxims of maritime regulation, unknown to the law of nations, and, though general in their verbal con-

* Sir James Harris to Lord Weymouth, 3rd of June, 1779. To shew the views of Potemkin, it is mentioned, that the new-born Grand-Duke was christened Constantine; had a Greek nurse, named Helen; and a new town was built, called Constantingorod.

† Sir James Harris to Lord Suffolk, 31st of December, 1778.

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1780.

struction, obviously prejudicial to Great Britain alone; had the address to make Catherine believe that the measure which he imparted originated with herself, and she soon directed all her efforts to its establishment. While armaments in several of her ports, and a mysterious alacrity among her ministers, indicated the formation of some extensive project, she announced the completion of her system, by a declaration to the

26th Feb.

courts of London, Versailles, and Madrid, in which she concluded a series of professions and complaints, by stating certain propositions as founded on the primitive rights of nations, which every people might reclaim, and which the belligerent powers could not invalidate, without violating the laws of neutrality. It was affirmed, in three of the articles, that goods in free bottoms must be free, and exempt from search; and another limited the characteristics of a blockaded port by so strict a definition, that a blockade was rendered almost impossible. These principles were announced as a rule for proceedings and judgments on the legality of prizes; and the Empress proclaimed her determination to support them with her whole maritime force.

All the enemies of England received this declaration with enthusiastic applause. The neutral powers

April.

extolled its wisdom, justice, and magnanimity. Sweden alone, under the influence of France, requested from the court of Petersburgh some explanations of its tendency, which were calculated to render the terms additionally hostile. Spain was the first of the belligerent powers which notified accession to the principles of

18th.

25th.

this unprecedented state paper. France warmly commended the new system, declaring its principles to be substantially those which Louis XVI had made war for the purpose of maintaining. Great Britain alone returned a civil but sullen answer, vindicating her own conduct during the war, and declaring the readiness of her courts of admiralty to render perfect justice in every case of complaint.

23rd.

Such a war as that wherein Great Britain was engaged must be carried on with manifest disadvan-

tage, if she was prevented from depriving the enemy of those succours on which the success of their naval operations so materially depended. Sir James Harris used every exertion in remonstrating with the Empress against the new rules of maritime law; but, although he succeeded in convincing her that she had been duped by France and Prussia into the adoption of a measure, which, under the pretence of neutrality, was hostile to England, he could not induce her to recede. She alleged her promises publicly given for its suport, and was beside flattered with the expectation of permanent glory, as the author of a new clause in the code of universal jurisprudence.

8th July. Accession of different powers.

Denmark and Sweden having acceded to the new system, which accorded with their scheme of commerce, the King of Prussia used every artifice to inflame the Empress and excite her to more resolute efforts. He caused incessant representations to be made against the violation of the laws of neutrality in the capture of Count Byland's fleet, and vainly endeavoured to engage Catherine to guarantee by treaty the possessions of Holland in every part of the globe, as the means of protecting the Dutch against the consequences to be apprehended from the growing differences with England. Foiled in this attempt, he commenced an insidious negotiation to be included in the armed neutrality, hoping eventually to find some pretence for a complaint against England, and involve all Europe in a general flame; but, for the present at least, this attempt was ineffectual: it was supported by Panin, but resisted by the Empress herself. She had been dazzled by the exalted reputation, cajoled by the flatteries, and, in some measure, benefited by the intrigues of Frederick; but his personal influence was now dangerously rivalled by the Emperor of Germany, for whom Catherine daily professed an increasing esteem. These two great potentates, early in the year, had an interview at Mohilow, on the frontiers of Poland; a discussion of their mutual interests produced mutual confidence and esteem; and an important secret treaty was concluded between them. As the views of

August.

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1778.

Prussia manifestly tended to the advantage of France and prejudice of Austria, every circumstance favourable to the Emperor was proportionately injurious to the Prussian monarch. His intrigues were now disregarded; and his agent, Panin, whose influence was much diminished, ineffectually endeavoured to instil into the mind of Catherine projects favourable to his views. The Prince Royal of Prussia*, soon after the meeting at Mohilow, was sent to Petersburgh for the purpose of effacing the impression made by the Emperor of Germany; France contributed to the magnificence of his establishment by a loan of four hundred thousand crowns; but his reception was so cold, that he returned to Berlin, disappointed and disgusted; public civilities and ostentatious entertainments made no compensation for his failure in the principal objects of his journey, the establishment of a high political character, and revival of an advantageous ascendancy†.

Yet, it is not to be understood that the opinions and feelings of the Emperor were altogether favourable to England, or adverse to the principles of the armed neutrality. On the contrary, Prince Kaunitz had remonstrated with great bitterness against our proceedings. On the capture of three Austrian vessels in the Mediterranean, which had been carried into Port Mahon, and condemned by the Judge of the Admiralty Court, although, as it was averred, they were loaded only with sugar, he observed that the Barbary corsairs were neither more rapacious than ours, nor their courts more partial than those of our Admiralty. Pursuing the same course of complaint on another occasion, he said, "Give us immediate "redress; do not put us under the necessity of adding "our voice to those of all neutral nations in declaring

* Afterward Frederick William II.

† On this subject I have consulted the State Papers, printed in the periodical works of the time, and collected in an 8vo. vol. published by Hatchard, 1801; The Life of Catherine II; Eton's Survey of the Turkish Empire, chap. x.; Lord Liverpool's Discourse on the Conduct of the Government of Great Britain in respect to Neutral Nations, ed. 1801, with a new preface; the Letters of Sulpicius on the Northern Confederacy; and an ample official correspondence on all the political transactions. I have also been favoured with much private information.

" that the spirit of despotism and depredation at sea, " which you will not prevent in your subjects, is no " longer to be endured." To the answer of the English Ambassador, that such acts were contrary to his Majesty's express commands, and would be redressed by courts of law, he replied, " Your words are very pro- " per and very well meant; but we are tired of words. " Report this conversation to Lord Stormont, and you " cannot give too much weight to my expressions of " his Imperial Majesty's feelings on this important and " delicate subject*."

Capture of Laurens.

Meanwhile the state of sullen dissatisfaction which occasioned the abolition of the ancient connexion between Great Britain and Holland, resolved itself into active hostility; the mystery which had covered the views and conduct of the Dutch was removed; and the court of Great Britain was impelled to a firm and decisive mode of conduct, as well in resentment of past treachery, as with a view to counteract the effects of the neutral league. The Vestal frigate, commanded by Captain Keppel, took, near the banks of Newfoundland, a Congress packet. The papers were thrown over-board; but, by the intrepidity of an English sailor, recovered with little damage. They fully proved the perfidy of the Dutch, who, before the existence of any dispute with Great Britain, had entered into a formal treaty of amity and commerce with the revolted colonies†, fully recognizing their independence, and containing many stipulations highly injurious to England and beneficial to her enemies both in Europe and America. Disagreements on some of the arrangements had occasioned delays in its completion; but Henry Laurens, late President of the Congress, who was one of the passengers in the captured vessel, was authorized to negotiate definitively, and enter-

3rd Sept.

Discovery of a treaty between Holland and America.

6th October.

* Sir Robert M. Keith to Lord Stormont, 16th of December, 1780, and 7th of May, 1781. An account of this whole transaction, the principles, causes, and immediate effects of this combination, from the mouth of Napoleon, is given in Gourgaud's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 96 to 108; it states the case, in its utmost strength, in favour of the alliance.

† It was dated 4th September, 1778, soon after the commencement of hostilities between England and France; and several days before the first complaints presented by the Dutch merchants.

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tained no doubt of success. On his arrival in London, Mr. Laurens was examined before the Privy Council, and, on his refusal to answer interrogatories, committed to the Tower.

The first discovery of this transaction occasioned a great sensation in Holland, where the people perceived, with surprise and indignation, that they were delivered, by factious agents*, into the hands of France, and involved in a secret treaty for espousing an uncertain cause, at the expense of inevitable hostility with an old ally. These sentiments would have been highly favourable to the Stadtholder, had he not negligently suffered the opportunity to pass; but the opposing faction, boldly avowing their agency, and making their utmost exertions to gain partisans, reaped the advantages of decision, and secured a protection against the consequences of investigation.

10th Nov. Memorials on the subject.

Sir Joseph Yorke presented a memorial, complaining of the hostile treaty, demanding from the States prompt satisfaction, a disavowal of conduct so repugnant to the most sacred engagements, and to the constitution of Batavia; and the exemplary punishment of Van Berkel and his accomplices, as disturbers of the public peace, and violators of the law of nations.

12th Dec.

This memorial producing no effect, the British ambassador presented another, in terms still more cogent and definitive, announcing that a denial of justice, or evasion of the demand by silence, would be followed by hostile extremities.

20th. War declared.

This remonstrance also failing, a royal manifesto was issued, declaring hostilities against Holland, and explaining, in clear and satisfactory terms, the King's motives;

29th.

Count Welderen was ordered to withdraw from the English court; and some papers which, just before his departure, he attempted to deliver, were refused by the Secretary of State, because the accustomed relation between the two countries had ceased, and with it the official and the accredited character of the ambassador†.

* The pensionary Van Berkel, and De Neufville of Amsterdam, who framed and executed the treaty, were principal supporters of the French party in Holland.

† Taken from the papers published by authority, and official correspondence.

This disclosure, and its consequences, were, at the first moment, extremely injurious to the Dutch; they gave strength to the hopes of the people of Flanders that the Emperor would increase their prosperity by carrying into effect a measure of which he had been desirous—the opening of the Scheldt; they disappointed the hope that Russia would guaranty the territories of Holland; for, being now a belligerent power, she could in no way be included in the neutral league.

CHAPTER THE FORTY-FIRST.

1780—1781.

State of the public mind—of ministers—of opposition.—Meeting of Parliament.—Election of a Speaker.—King's speech.—Debates on the address.—Westminster resolutions.—Navy estimates.—Discussion on Keppel and Palliser.—Recess.—Royal message announcing war with Holland—addresses voted.—Popular delegates appointed.—Burke's economical reform again introduced.—First speech of William Pitt—the bill rejected.—Other popular efforts.—Mr. Sheridan's motion respecting the Military.—Petition of the delegates.—Motion of thanks to Lord Cornwallis and Sir Henry Clinton.—Mr. Hartley's motion for peace with America.—Petition of American prisoners.—Close of the session.

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State of the public mind.

THE events on the continent, which have been just narrated, had not all been completed when the new Parliament was to assemble; but they were in such a state, that their final result might with certainty be anticipated, and the embarrassment of administration was proportionably increased. Nor was the prospect at home cheering or consolatory. Influenced by prophecies of evil, too often verified, pressed by taxes, which they feared more than felt, and unsettled by wild and extravagant speculations on reform, and complaints of influence and abuse of power, the public felt either distaste or languor at the thought of prosecuting the war; and, if they were not yet prepared to desire the concession of American independence, which they were taught to consider synonymous with the ruin and extinction of Great Britain, still the warm enthusiasm which prevailed at earlier periods of the contest, the resolution to brave every evil, and submit to every privation rather than incur the disgrace of

submission, were no longer to be described as the general characteristics.

Among ministers a wide difference of opinion subsisted; a portion of them, with whom the King accorded entirely, abhorred, as unwise and disgraceful, the allowance of American independence; while others, including Lord North, were anxious to obtain peace, even at the expense of the required sacrifice. Doubtful of the success of measures, and urged by feelings of prudence, the Prime-Minister had often expressed a desire to resign, but had been induced to retain his situation by the remonstrance and urgent request of the King*.

Of ministers.

While the cabinet was thus hesitative and divided, the opposition party, whatever might be the diversity of their opinions respecting the great question, the independence of the colonies, were firmly combined in their determination, by whatever means, to thwart the proceedings and impede the operations of government. A strenuous and zealous Whig speaks of them and their efforts in these terms:—"While the contest subsisted only between this nation and America, the attention of men was engaged in examining the origin of government, the limits of freedom, the political restraints of commerce, the legal conditions of taxation, and the hitherto undefined extent of parliamentary authority and colonial rights. When questions thus abstruse, and thus complicated, were in debate, mutual charity, and even mutual deference, were due among those who could not agree in their general principles, or in the application of them to a particular case. Yet, surely all difficulties in speculation, or, at least, all opposition in practice, ought to have vanished upon the first appearance of hostilities from an enemy by whose interposition every man was injured, and by whose success no man could be benefited. It pains me, however, to reflect that national danger hath not yet produced national unani-

Of opposition.

* From some minutes and extracts of letters, communicated to Mr. Jared Sparks, and published in his Life of General Washington, vol. i. p. 458. In a future page will be found some observations on these documents.

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1780.

"mity; and that our internal divisions constitute no "small part of our misfortunes, and of our crimes. "Great allowances are, I confess, to be made for im- "proprieties of expression, and even for some irregu- "larities of behaviour, into which men may be pre- "cipitated under the consciousness of upright inten- "tions, and by the impulse of strong sensibilities. "But a race of men has lately started up among us, "for whom, as candour can suggest no apology for "them, so indignation itself can scarcely furnish a "name. It is the peculiar, and I hope the unenvied, "privilege of these men to aggravate every mistake, "to triumph in every disappointment, to arraign, "without distinction and without reserve, every mea- "sure of their superiors; and to ascribe it either to "the most despicable weakness, or the most flagitious "wickedness. They consider the exaltation of Ame- "rica as inseparable from the depression of their own "country. They look with unconcern upon the in- "sidious designs of those who ever must be our ene- "mies; while these designs are supposed to baffle "every hope of reunion with those who were once our "friends. They seem to measure their own wisdom "by the assumed errors of their governors, and their "own importance by the exaggerated sufferings of the "governed. Instead of pressing forward with vigour "and alacrity to the attainment of some good which "may yet be within our reach, they rather choose to "take an invidious retrospect of that which is already "lost. Instead of promoting the public welfare by "well-timed concessions, well-planned counsels, and "well-directed efforts, they are too intent upon in- "dulging their resentment against those whom they "represent as the voluntary authors of all our calami- "ties. Instead of supporting the arm of our national "strength, when lifted up against the national foe, "they eventually, I dare not say designedly, open new "prospects to his pride, supply fresh virulence to his "malice, and give far greater efficacy to his devices*."

* Sermon by Dr. Parr, on the fast-day, in 1781. Works, vol. ii. p. 329.

It has been asserted that the sudden dissolution prevented the efforts of opposition in contesting counties and cities, and in securing their interests in various parts of the kingdom; but this statement can hardly be correct, as the late Parliament had already existed six years, and would, if not dissolved, have expired at the end, or possibly before the end, of the next session.

31st October. Meeting of Parliament. Election of a Speaker.

The first indispensable business, the election of a Speaker, occasioned a strenuous debate. The hostility which had been displayed by Sir Fletcher Norton precluded him from the hope of nomination by the ministry; but his removal was effected with some appearances of indirectness. Lord North took no share in the transaction, nor did any county member or country gentleman move the appointment of another. Lord George Germaine, lamenting the declining health of the late Speaker, and the interruption of business which it had occasioned, and affirming that it rendered him no longer capable of an office so laborious, proposed William Wolfran Cornwall to fill the chair.

Sir Fletcher Norton, in answer to these insincere condolences, declared that his health was perfectly re-established, and complained of the unkind treatment which he experienced from administration, after having, at their request, retained his laborious situation during two whole sessions, contrary to the advice of his physicians, and at the peril of his life. The members of opposition insisted that he was sacrificed to ministerial resentment, chiefly on account of his memorable address to the King, and divided the House on his re-election, which was negatived*. He was, however, gratified by a vote of thanks for his conduct, which was conveyed, in flattering terms, by his successor.

20th Nov. 1st February 1781.

1st of Nov. King's Speech.

The King, in his speech, expressed unusual satisfaction in meeting Parliament at a period when the late elections would supply certain information of the wishes and disposition of the people, to which he was always inclined to pay the utmost attention and regard.

* 203 to 134.

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He complained of the unprovoked aggression of the Bourbon family; but hoped the late successes in Georgia and Carolina would be attended with important consequences in bringing the war to a happy conclusion. Safe and honourable terms of peace could only be secured by such powerful and respectable preparations as would show in Great Britain a firm resolution not to receive the law from any powers whatever, and to decline no difficulty or hazard in defending the country and preserving its essential interests. His Majesty declared his entire confidence in the zeal and affection of Parliament; conscious that, during his whole reign, the constant object of his care and wish of his heart had been to promote the true interests and happiness of all his subjects, and to preserve inviolate the constitution in church and state.

1st of Nov. Debates on the address.

6th Nov.

In the Upper House, an amendment was moved on the address; but the debate was not distinguished by novelty or vigour*. The amendment in the Commons was more ably supported; though the discussion was not so interesting as on many similar occasions. The friends of administration inferred topics of consolation from the heterogeneous combination of France and Spain with America; the impossibility of cordiality in such an union, or of happy results to a cause, supposed to be that of liberty and the Protestant religion, when protected only by bigoted Catholics, and powers in whose political vocabulary the word freedom was not to be found. It was represented as a great advantage that England was without allies; since no league against a power compact within itself, and combining its energies by unanimity of council, had ever yet been crowned with success. The contest with America was represented as more prosperous than at any previous period since the convention of Saratoga.

General Smith denied the assertion: the circumstances of the country, he said, were infinitely worse; and, since the affair of Trenton, every military man had clearly discerned that all attempts to subdue

* The division was 68 to 23.

America were fruitless prodigalities of blood and treasure. Mr. Fox admired the gallantry and good conduct of Lord Cornwallis and his officers at Camden; but would not thank even his own brother, who was serving in America, for laurels gathered in a war which he hated and detested, regarding it as the fountain head of all the mischief and calamities which oppressed this miserable nation. He ridiculed the hopes expressed in the speech, founded on the late victories. Expectation had been equally ardent when the Americans were defeated at Long Island; the battle of Brandywine was expected to occasion the immediate reduction of all the provinces, and extermination of American rebellion; and the capture of Ticonderoga had produced hopes no less extravagant. Events had constantly belied these sanguine predictions; and yet, in spite of experience, Parliament were taught to expect glorious consequences, if the late successes in Carolina were pursued with vigour. To him the capture of Charlestown conveyed only the alarming certainty that ministers were deceived in believing the majority of the Americans friendly to the British government; the people, notwithstanding their oaths, had flocked, even with their arms, to the standard of Gates. Every gleam of success had hitherto been the forerunner of misfortune: the loss of the whole army succeeded the capture of Ticonderoga; the evacuation of Philadelphia followed another success; and no sooner was the surrender of Charlestown announced, than a new disaster was expected, and in part experienced, in the loss of Rhode Island, the only good winter harbour in America. He had no objection to congratulate His Majesty on a late addition to his family; long might his domestic enjoyments increase; they were his only enjoyments. Unfortunate in every other respect; unfortunate abroad, and unfortunate in the conduct of civil affairs at home, he was happy and entitled to congratulation in private life; but no blessings were enjoyed under his government. "How "long," Mr. Fox exclaimed, "shall the sacred shield

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" of Majesty be interposed for the protection of a weak " administration? The word is made subservient to " every legerdemain trick, and every illusion dictated " by convenience. If, by the blessings of his reign " are understood the personal virtues of the Sovereign, " I am ready to acknowledge them with respect and " reverence; but, if the phrase implies the acts and " projects of his ministers, I detest and reprobate " them: they have formed one continued series of " disgrace, misfortune, and calamity." He then descanted severely on the manner of dissolving the late parliament; and compared the famous vote respecting the influence of the crown to the death-bed confessions and mock penitence of other abandoned profligates, who, in their last moments, admonish others to avoid courses which occasioned a premature and untimely end.

6th December. Nov. 10th. Westminster Resolution.

The amendment was negatived.* Mr. Fox's new constituents, the electors of Westminster, testified their approbation, by voting, in the committee of their association, their conviction that nothing would induce him to desert the cause of the people; and, as the firm, constant, and intrepid performance of his duty would probably render him the object of such attacks as he had already experienced, and to which every unprincipled partizan of power was invited by the certainty of a reward, they exhorted the inhabitants of Westminster to do their utmost, by every legal measure, to preserve to themselves and to the country the benefit of his services and the inviolable security of his person. Mr. Adam gave an undue importance to this foolish effusion, by mentioning it in Parliament, as a personal attack upon himself, founded on the duel in which he had been engaged; and he amused the house by comparing Mr. Fox to Pisistratus, who, having a body-guard appointed by the people, overturned the liberty of his country; and he hailed the honourable member as "King of Westminster." Mr. Fox repelled the

* 212 to 130.

supposed parallel, expressed approbation of the resolutions, and declared that he was not present at, or acquainted with, their formation.

No other business of importance was discussed till the recess; the ordinary transactions of supply, the suspension of the habeas corpus, the incidental complaints respecting returns, and votes of thanks to the commanders in America, engaging the principal attention of the House. In the Committee of supply, 13th. on the production of the navy estimates, a long discussion took place on the non-employment of certain officers, particularly Lord Howe, and Admirals Keppel, Campbell, Barrington, and Pigot. Such was the ostensible intent of the debate; the real object seems to have been the revival of an old subject of contention. Sir Hugh Palliser had recently received his appointment as Governor of Greenwich Hospital, and the circumstances of the two courts-martial were recapitulated. The opposition members insisted that the decision of that on Admiral Keppel, which termed the articles preferred by his opponent false and malicious, fixed on him an indelible stigma; while on the other side it was maintained, that in making such a declaration the Court had shewn great partiality and exceeded their just powers, which did not extend to the condemnation of a man who was not on trial before them, and could not be heard in his own defence. Sir Hugh Palliser made a long and able statement of his case; and Admiral Keppel, in answer, called him the "Governor of Greenwich Hospital;" declaring that, for the future, he should distinguish him by no other appellative. If any pleasure accrued from the use of this contumelious observation, it was the only result which the Admiral could attain: the supposed glory of the 27th of July had evaporated with the compulsory illumination on his acquittal. It is true, that on being rejected at Windsor, which had before returned him, he sat in Parliament, as representative of the county of Surrey; but still no general public feeling existed in his favour.

December 4th. Navy estimates. Barrington, Keppel, and Palliser.

On a subsequent day, Mr. Fox made a separate February 1st.

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and unsuccessful motion to declare the appointment of Sir Hugh Palliser, after the sentence of the court-martial, subversive of discipline*.

25th Jan. Message to Parliament.

Immediately after the recess, the rupture with Holland was announced to Parliament by a royal message. The public indignation was sufficiently excited, by the malignity and ingratitude of the Dutch, to render the war popular; and the vigour and promptitude of the preparations afforded general satisfaction. The message was, nevertheless, debated with great warmth in both houses, and amendments moved to the addresses. It was asserted that the insolence of Sir Joseph Yorke's memorial in 1777 had been more efficacious in alienating the Dutch than all the gold and intrigues of France. The paper found in the possession of Mr. Laurens was only a project or draft of an incomplete treaty, referring for its future accomplishment to events yet undecided. Ministers were blamed for the length of the recess, during which they had added another to the formidable list of our opponents, while their supineness, ignorance, and want of judgment, left us without an ally.

The ministry answered, that the memorial in 1777 was sufficiently temperate for the occasion: his Majesty would have been culpably negligent of the national honour had he omitted a forcible remonstrance. The offensive treaty was not a draft, but formally executed by the pensionary Van Berkel, and John de Neufville, citizen of Amsterdam, on the part of Holland, and by Lee, on that of America. The Dutch, refusing to disavow the transaction, must be deemed to have fully approved it. The recess of Parliament was not continued for the purpose of secret proceeding; the Houses, if sitting, could not have received a communication on the subject till the negotiation was terminated. Mr. Wraxall made an able speech on the subject of alliances, unfolding the views and resources of the principal European states, and recommending a close and immediate connexion with the Emperor

* Lost by 214 to 149.

of Germany. If that potentate declared war in our favour, the necessity of providing an adequate opposing force would frustrate all hopes of increasing the French marine; and the shock would be felt no less at Madrid and the Hague, than at Paris. The Emperor might be allured to our cause by a liberal subsidy for enabling him to take the field, by yielding to him some important possessions in India, and by protecting him in opening the navigation of the Scheldt. This measure would be beneficial to him and injurious to Holland; a nation which owed its origin, progress, and protection, to the fostering hand of England, and yet joined the standard of the House of Bourbon against its natural ally.

The amendments moved in both Houses were rejected*; the Lords entered on their journals two protests, one signed by nine, the other by eight peers.

Popular delegates appointed.

Although the tremendous disorders of the preceding year occasioned great terror at direct appeals to large bodies of the people, the political associations formed in all parts of the kingdom did not dissolve, but endeavourd, by incendiary resolutions, to reanimate the flame of opposition. In many of their meetings, strong complaints were urged against the authorities supposed to be now first granted to the military, and individuals were recommended to arm against the attack of surrounding enemies and all invasions of their rights and liberties. The meetings of these associations in the counties and towns were highly alarming; but the danger was increased by the novel and unconstitutional measure of appointing delegates or representatives to transact their affairs in the capital, and, by mutual aid and advice, give support and efficacy to their petitions. Mr. Burke received from many of these bodies high compliments for his efforts in the cause of reform, and, in compliance with their requests, again brought forward the rejected bills of last year.

* In the House of Commons two amendments were moved; the first was rejected by 180 to 101, the other without a division. The numbers in the Upper House were, against the amendment, 84; for it, 19.

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15th Feb. Burke's economical reform again introduced.

He introduced a motion by reading the famous resolutions respecting the increased influence of the Crown, the power of the House to correct abuses in the expenditure of the civil list, and the duty of the Commons to afford the redress required by the petitions of the people. He considered these resolutions a valuable legacy bequeathed by the late Parliament, and an atonement for previous criminal servility. They were the result of long, deliberate, and sober debate, when the House was well attended, and a spirit of economy pervaded every corner. He trusted the new Parliament would consider it their duty to carry into effect the wishes of the people, wishes which had been delivered in thunder and lightning. Although the people had not agreed in any system of complaint, or plan of reform, yet they had all stated either errors or calamities in the administration of government and expense, which ought to be rectified. Although all their propositions were not practicable, they agreed in two points—the dangerous influence of the Crown, and the necessity for retrenchment and economy. He then gave a narrative of the introduction and fate of his former bills, complaining of the versatility of Parliament. At first, crowded houses were seen in every stage of the business, and they showed an apparent conviction of having no objection to the abstract and general propositions; but when he proceeded to a specific reform, they deserted him and his cause. They first dwindled off from one question, then silently stole away from another, till at last the whole was permitted to moulder and shrink imperceptibly from the view, and he was obliged, after much fatigue and no success, to abandon the task, with the mortifying reflection that his labours and those of the House had produced no benefit to the country. He defended himself against all imputations on the revival of an unsuccessful proposition, and vindicated his plan, as no less useful to the King than salutary to the people. To maintain the parade and show of royalty without its power, was like the absurd vanity of robbing the manger to decorate a starved,

emaciated horse with bells and trappings, while the poor animal, deprived of food, groaned beneath the wretchedness of ornament. The advice and language he used could not be unseasonable or impertinent, if addressed to an Alexander or a Charles; retrenchment, increasing their powers for war, would enable them to diffuse horror with more rapidity; but to a King like ours, who hated war, and loved peace, who participated in the interests, joys, and disasters of the people, it must be at once proper and welcome. A faction had crept in, and prevented that happy sympathy which should prevail between the head and all the inferior members of the body: this faction it was the business of Parliament to crush, to tear the veil interposed between the Sovereign and his people, and dispel those clouds which concealed the royal countenance from his dutiful and affectionate subjects. Again adverting to the example of France, Mr. Burke pronounced high encomiums on the principles and system of Necker. That excellent statesman, he said, although an unprotected foreigner, had stood his ground amidst the cabals and intrigues of a court. Calumny might attempt to blacken him; but it was impossible to blind the discernment of his Sovereign, or obliterate from his memory this honourable truth; "he has given me a "navy, and has not laid a tax on my subjects." When the resources of France were thought to be exhausted, and every common channel was known to be dried up, Necker dug into the mine of national treasure, went to the spring and fountain-head of revenue, and by demolishing the dams and dykes that stopped the current of wealth, brought into the Exchequer the value of six hundred useless places. France might be obliged, at last, to have recourse to burthensome taxes; but, for three years, she had fought Great Britain without them; and an exertion of three years might give her a decisive superiority through the whole contest; it might put her system in such a train as to give the tone and determine the complexion of a whole century; it would impart more solid and permanent glory to the reign of Louis XVI than was derived

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from all the illustrious deeds of Henry IV*. Mr. Burke invoked the candour of the House not to treat the proposed measure with insidious respect in its outset, and tempt it to a death of slow and lingering torture. He called on Lord North as arbiter of its destiny; entreating that, if he meant to deal the blow of death, he would save himself and the House much fatigue, and the nation much anxiety and disappointment, by determining the matter on that day; he would then be, for one day at least, a decisive minister.

26th Feb.

Leave was given, without opposition, to bring in a bill for regulating his Majesty's civil establishment, limiting pensions, and suppressing useless places. The second reading occasioned a long debate, in which the principles of the measure, and its probable effects, were amply and ably investigated. The principal opponents were Mr. De Grey, Earl Nugent, Mr. Rosewarne, Mr. Percival, Mr. Wraxall, and Mr. Dundas. They all concurred in warm eulogies on the character and talents of Mr. Burke, and expressed diffidence in resisting a measure so plausible, and so captivating to the public, as retrenchment of expenditure. Economy was never more necessary; but its advantages were not to be purchased by the violation of sacred rights. In the first year of the King's reign, the civil list was established at eight hundred thousand pounds; and the additional sum of one hundred thousand pounds per annum was afterward given; both being settled on him for life. This was a bargain, and one highly advantageous to the public, made in lieu of the Crown lands; the revenue was therefore to be considered as positive freehold, as a personal estate, held under the faith and solemnity of an equitable contract. The power of Parliament to resume its own grants was undeniable; but it was impossible to divide the ideas of their omnipotence from those of their justice and discretion. Economy was undoubtedly desirable; but thirty or forty thousand pounds a year would be too

* Within three months after the delivery of this eulogy, Necker was dismissed from office; his plan of finance was afterward more particularly investigated, and found to be a mere shallow delusion.

dearly purchased by the abolition of places created by the wisdom of our ancestors, to support the dignity and lustre of the British Crown. The increase of influence was an unfounded assertion; nor was the present bound by the vote of the last Parliament on that subject. The established powers and influence of the Crown had not been abused, or perverted to the prejudice of liberty and the constitution. None of the places proposed to be retrenched were created by his Majesty, and the acts of his reign had been highly favourable to the liberties of the country and diminution of undue influence; witness those for rendering permanent the salaries of the judges, and for trying controverted elections, which effectually abrogated the power, if the inclination might exist, of biassing courts of justice, and perverting the sense of the people in returns to the House of Commons. The reasonings founded on retrenchment made in France were inapplicable to Great Britain; the civil list, as well as the governments, were essentially different: France was a despotic, England a free country. In England the throne was built on liberty; in France it rested on the necks of two hundred thousand soldiers, and was upheld by farmers-general, by oppression, by servile parliaments banished at pleasure, by military rigour, and armed authority. If the conduct of France was to be cited, the whole should be considered, and unprovoked aggression brought into view as clearly as economical reform: bad faith was always bad policy; and the greater evil of unjust war would swallow up the lesser good of economical retrenchment. The dignity of the British Crown was connected with the dignity and opulence of the nation, nor could the enormous expenses, into which Great Britain had been forced by the enemy, be repaired by such an unimportant saving as the bill proposed, acquired at the expense of individuals who, relying on the good faith of Parliament, considered their property as secure and permanent as freehold estates.

First speech of Mr. William Pitt.

This debate was distinguished by the first parliamentary exertion of the Honourable William Pitt,

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second son of the illustrious Earl of Chatham, who had not yet completed his twenty-second year. On his rising, mute attention prevailed; the genius of the parent was recollected, and the most eager curiosity was excited to ascertain how great a portion of it was transmitted to the son. Such great hopes and anxious expectations were never more amply gratified; the juvenile orator delivered himself with grace, facility, and animation; his manner, which afterward became so elegant, was deliberate, and equally remote from timid bashfulness, and overweening presumption. His voice was rich and striking; his periods harmonious and energetic, without appearance of art or study; and his reasoning displayed all the fire of his father, combined with that which his father often wanted, methodical arrangement and lucid order.

He gave hearty assent to the principle of the bill, and thought a proposition for retrenchment of the civil list revenue would have come with more grace, more benefit to the public service, if it had sprung from the royal breast. Ministers should have given to the people the consolation of knowing that their sovereign participated in the sufferings of the empire; they ought to have consulted the glory of their royal master, and seated him in the hearts of his people, by abating from magnificence what was due to necessity. Instead of waiting for the slow request of a burthened people, they should have courted popularity by a voluntary surrender of useless revenue. But if ministers failed in their duty; if they interfered between the benignity of the sovereign and the distresses of the public, and stopped the tide of royal sympathy, was that a reason why the House of Commons, his Majesty's public counsellors, should desist from a measure so congenial to the paternal feelings of the Sovereign, so applicable to the wants and miseries of the people? The House, acting as faithful representatives, ought to seize on every object of equitable resource; and surely none were so fair, so probable, or so flattering, as retrenchment and economy. The obligations of their character demanded an un-

hesitating pursuit of those objects, even to the foot of the throne. Actuated by duty, they should advise the King to part with useless ostentation, that he might preserve necessary power; to abate a little pomp, that he might ascertain respect; to diminish somewhat of exterior grandeur, that he might increase and secure authentic dignity. It was their immediate duty, as the Commons House of Parliament, to guard the lives, liberties, and property of the people: the last obligation was the strongest, because property was most liable to invasion by the secret and subtile attacks of influence. It could not derogate from the real glory of the Crown to accept the advice; it could be no diminution of true grandeur to yield to the respectful petitions of the people. Tutelage might be a hard term; but the guardianship of that House could not be disgraceful to a constitutional King. The abridgment of unnecessary expense could be no abatement of royalty. Magnificence and grandeur were not inconsistent with retrenchment and economy; but, on the contrary, in times of necessity and uncommon exertion, solid grandeur was dependent on the reduction of expense. It was observed, early in the debate, that the bill combined two objects which ought to have been separate—reform and economy; in his opinion, they ought to go hand-in-hand; but the bill had a third object, more important than either, a reduction of the influence of the Crown; an influence more dreadful, because more secret in its attacks, and more concealed in its operations, than the power of prerogative. The proposed saving, it was objected, was immaterial, a matter of trifling consideration when measured by the necessities or expenses of the times. This was surely a most singular and unaccountable species of reasoning. The calamities of the crisis were too great to be benefited by economy; the public expenses so enormous, that it was ridiculous to attend to small matters of account. So many millions had been expended, that thousands were beneath consideration. Such was the language of the day, such the reasoning by which the principle of the bill was disputed. Much

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argument had been used to show the impropriety of resuming a parliamentary grant, and the right of the House had even been denied: the weakness of such a doctrine was its refutation. But it ought to be remembered that the civil-list revenue was granted for other purposes than those of personal gratification. It was granted to support the dignity and interests of the empire, to maintain its grandeur, to pay the judges and foreign ministers, to uphold justice, and support respect, to pay the great officers necessary to the lustre of the Crown; and it was proportioned to the dignity and opulence of the people. But the sum of revenue which was necessary to sustain the common dignity of the Crown and people at the time of the grant, ought now to be abated, as necessities had increased. The people who afforded that revenue under the circumstances of the occasion, were justified in resuming a part under the pressing demand of an altered situation. They felt their right, but exercised it with pain and regret. They approached the throne with bleeding hearts, afflicted at the necessity of applying for retrenchment of the royal gratification; but the request was at once loyal and submissive. When he considered the obligations of the House, he could not cherish an idea that they would dispute the principle of the bill, which was essential to the being and independence of the country. He could not believe that economy would be condemned, or the means of accomplishing it abandoned*.

The bill rejected.

Several distinguished members of opposition exerted themselves in behalf of the measure; Lord Maitland made his first parliamentary essay on the same side, and spoke with great ability; and Mr. Burke, in his reply, surpassed the expectations even of his warmest admirers. The motion for a second reading was, however, lost†, and the bill rejected, by adjourning the further consideration for six months.

Other popular efforts.

The other popular efforts of the last session were

* For some anecdotes relating to this first parliamentary display see Tomline's Life of Pitt, vol. i. p. 22, 4to.

† 233 to 190.

revived; the bills for excluding contractors and revenue officers from the House of Commons met their fate on the same day; both occasioned some debate, but were rejected*. Sir Philip Jennings Clerke also renewed the proposition, which Mr. Gilbert had abandoned, for imposing a tax on places and pensions; but his effort was unsuccessful†. The loan for the current service of the year was exposed to censures unusually severe. The sudden rise in value of the subscription contracts, usually called scrip, to near eleven per cent. above their original purchase, formed the foundation for numerous imputations and motions against the minister; though his conduct was ably defended and sanctioned by the House‡. The third reading of the bill in the Lords produced an able speech from the Marquis of Rockingham; to which no reply was made; and eight lords joined in a protest.

21st March
21st May.

7th, 8th, 12th, and 26th March.
21st March.

These were not the only efforts to gain popularity by the discussion of questions calculated to interest the public. The interference of the military in suppressing the late alarming riots was introduced to the House by Mr. Sheridan. This gentleman, a native of Ireland, was advantageously known to the public by the exercise of extraordinary talents in dramatic and lyric poetry. His exquisite wit and refined erudition afforded great hopes of eminence in the senate; hopes which were surpassed by the various excellences of his nervous, rich, and beautiful oratory. He took his seat for the town of Stafford, and had, on more than one occasion, obtained the favourable attention of the House§. His motions were three; the first declaring that the military force could not justifiably be applied in dispersing tumultuous assemblies, without waiting for directions from civil magistrates, unless outrages had broken forth with such violence as to overbear civil authority, and threaten the subversion of legal government. The other two affirmed that the unpre-

Mr. Sheridan's motion respecting the military.

* The contractor's bill by 120 to 100; the other, 133 to 86.

† The bill was rejected on the second reading, 93 to 33.

‡ The majority against a motion on the subject, made by Mr. Fox, was 169 to 111, and on a motion for inquiry, by Sir George Savile, 209 to 163.

§ He made his first speech the 20th of November, 1780.

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cedented order to the military, on the seventh of June, afforded strong presumption of the defective state of the police, and required the appointment of a committee to inquire into the conduct of the magistracy and civil power during the riots, and report to the House the state and government of the city of Westminster.

In support of these motions, he made a philippic against government, in glowing language, and abounding in pointed invectives. To the miserable state of the police in Westminster he ascribed all the disorders which had occasioned the establishment of military power in the metropolis, and its extension to every part of the kingdom. But, if the guilt of magistrates or deficiency of police had occasioned the adoption of such an alarming expedient, why had government permitted the same justices to continue in the commission? Men of tried inability and convicted depravity! Was this neglect a plan to render the country still dependent on the bayonet, and must the military power still be employed in aid of contrived weakness and deliberate inattention? Some might wish to see the subject familiarized to the use of soldiers, and that they might be resorted to on occasions less alarming.

Only two reasonable excuses could be assigned for the conduct of government in the orders issued for the employment of the military. The first, that the riots were not produced by the persons who had assembled around the House, instigated by religious enthusiasm, or apprehensive zeal; nor yet by a set of vagrants, who had taken advantage of the occasion; but that they were the effects of a deliberate and deep-laid scheme; a conspiracy contrived by the enemies of the country to lay the metropolis in ashes, and strike at the very foundations of the national wealth and credit. Such was the opinion maintained by the Lord Chief-Justice of the King's Bench in Parliament, and by another Judge on the Bench; but no proceeding in either House had shown that such a notion was entertained; and, if all the trials were perused, from the first unhappy man brought to the bar of the Old Bailey, up

to Lord George Gordon, it would be found that he alone was charged with high treason. He was both leader and army in this great machination against the state; not one of his subalterns having risen above the humble charge of felony. The progress of the riots, as well as the evidence on the trials, would prove the futility of imputing them to a regular scheme or deep-laid plot against the country.

The other reason which might justify government for the orders they had issued, was their belief that the substitution of the military for the civil power was, in all cases of tumult and riot, safe, easy, and constitutional. If this doctrine could be established, farewell to freedom! If this was law, the country would be reduced to a military government of the very worst species, including all the mischiefs of despotism, without the discipline or the security. But it was said the best protection against this evil was found in the virtue, moderation, and constitutional principles of the sovereign. Though he contemplated those virtues with as much reverence as any man, he trusted such a species of liberty would never disgrace the British soil. Liberty, resting on the virtuous inclinations of any one man, was but suspended despotism; the sword was not, indeed, on the necks of the people, but it hung by the small and brittle thread of human will.

After a long debate, in which the conduct of government in the suppression of the riots, and the indictment of Lord George Gordon, were ably defended, the first of Mr. Sheridan's motions was withdrawn, the second negatived by a considerable majority*, and the third without a division.

Petition of the Delegates. 1780.

The associations and their delegates had, during the whole session, engaged much attention in Parliament. In the debate on the King's speech, Lord Abingdon expressed his expectations, that through them a new order of affairs would be introduced, which would render useless such minutiæ as addresses. He wished the people might obtain a new Magna

1st of Nov.

* 171 to 94.

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Charta, a new declaration of rights; for the present Government was arbitrary; a system of despotism, ruling by will, and not by law. Mr. Adam justly

13th of March.

stigmatised these committees for spreading baleful effects over the whole country, and affording encouragement to its enemies. The American Congress made them a principal engine in encouraging the people of the colonies to persist in rebellion; and, in their publications, descanted on the distractions occasioned in Great Britain by the committees of association, as inducements to perseverance.

2nd of April.

The principle and legality of the associations, and particularly the dangerous system of sending delegates, came more fully into discussion, when a petition,

8th of May.

signed by thirty-two of these mock representatives of unconstitutional constituents, was offered to the House by Mr. Duncombe; and afterward, on the motion of Sir George Savile for referring it to a committee. The petition was founded on that from Yorkshire presented to the last Parliament, and supported by nearly the same arguments, with the addition of those which resulted from the resolutions on the increasing influence of the crown.

Beside the objections to the contents of the petition, it was reprobated as being signed by men who had notoriously assumed the unconstitutional character of delegates and committee men, who assembled in that capacity, formed resolutions, and published them in newspapers; all which proceedings were founded in a design to awe and controul Parliament. The House was cautioned by Lord Fielding to beware of conjuring up a spirit which the tremendous events of last year alone had laid. How far that spirit would have extended was difficult to say; but the discontinuance of its operation was sudden and remarkable. The associated bodies had adjourned or dissolved; conversation had undergone a material change; appeals to the people on the subject of recurring to first principles were no longer made, and even newspapers ceased to be declamatory and violent. Mr. Courtenay attacked these confederacies in his usual vein of rail-

lery; comparing the associations to self-erected political hand-posts, placed in all parts of the country to shew the people what path they should pursue. He animadverted with severity on the characters of the delegates.

> Their wise Divan the best companions grace,
> Chiefs out of war, and Members out of place,
> Who fondly mingle in their hope-filled bowl
> The feast of reason and the flow of soul.

The defence of the committees and their delegates was principally founded on the want of a positive prohibitory law. Sir George Savile's motion was rejected.

1780. Nov. 27th. Motion of thanks to Lord Cornwallis and Sir Henry Clinton.

In the course of the session, the origin and conduct of the war were frequently brought into discussion; and the topics urged by the opposition were in general less to be noticed for their novelty than the unbounded virulence with which they were urged. On a motion of thanks to Lord Cornwallis and Sir Henry Clinton, for the capture of Charles Town and the victory at Camden, Mr. Wilkes arraigned the character of the noble Commander. In conjunction with four other respectable characters, the earls of Tankerville and Shelburne, Viscount Torrington and Lord Camden, he had denied our right to tax America; and Mr. Pitt, when he spoke of the five illustrious heroes who opposed the declaratory act, did not foresee the slaughter of his fellow subjects in the same cause, by one of those illustrious heroes, at the glorious victory of Camden. The palm of such a victory was a kind of wretched anti-civic crown, which must disgrace the sanguinary brow of an unfeeling, unprincipled conqueror. He considered the two generals and Admiral Arbuthnot unworthy of praise; they had bathed their swords in the blood of their innocent American fellow subjects; and he declared the independence of America to be already secured. Sir Joseph Mawbey and Mr. Sheridan expressed similar sentiments; and Mr. Fox, while he admitted the merit of the officers in question, would not separate the intention from the action. The name of Admiral Arbuthnot had been added to the motion

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as an amendment, and he would not vote thanks to any admiral while the navy of England was in such bad hands. Lord North vindicated the consistency of Lord Cornwallis, and the opposition did not venture a division on the question.

May 30th. Mr. Hartley's motion for peace with America.

Mr. Hartley moved for leave to bring in a bill enabling the Crown to restore peace with America. When the motion had been seconded by Sir Philip Jennings Clerke, a pause ensued, which led to an apprehension that ministers would leave the proposition to the fate of a silent vote; but, Sir George Savile having censured the sullen silence maintained on such an occasion as exceedingly unbecoming, Lord North said he considered observations unnecessary, as the subject had been discussed and the sense of the House taken upon it in two successive sessions. The motion was nugatory, as ministers were in possession of all necessary powers, and the present commanders had full authority to treat.

This speech produced the desired effect. Mr. Fox denied the assertion of the King's authority, and described the American war as made and maintained only to perpetuate the power and influence of the minister, which existed through it, and with it must expire. For this he had encountered shame and embraced it. He had been forced into all those vile measures of contradiction and absurdity, which brought infamy on the present age, and would bring ruin on all posterity. In the course of his speech, he exhibited the want of patriotism in ministers, the want of value in the victories, for gaining which parliament had been so free in voting thanks, and the want of wisdom in giving credit to such wretches as Mr. Galloway. The war would never end while the present system continued; it was unjust in its principles, absurd in its prosecution, and would be pernicious in its consequences. Mr. Burke illustrated the notion of the co-eval duration of the ministry and the war by an allusion to the artificial noses mentioned in Hudibras as the handy-work of the learned Taliacotius, which lasted only while the parent flesh was living.

Lord George Germaine, Mr. Welbore Ellis, and Sir Henry Houghton, made observations on the principal points in these speeches; and, on a division, the motion was rejected*.

12th of June. Motion for a committee on the American war.

At a late period of the session, Mr. Fox moved for a committee to consider of the American war; and intimated his intention of proposing a resolution, "that "ministers ought immediately to take every measure "for concluding peace with the colonies." He descanted on the circumstances of the war, including even the latest intelligence, and inferred the absolute impossibility of conquest.

The motion operated as a kind of test on the new members; most of the speeches contained some general principles, or professions of political faith, and many of them historical reviews of the origin and conduct of the war. In answer to some observations, reflecting on the political conduct of the late Earl of Chatham, Mr. Pitt made a speech of extraordinary ability, vindicating the whole parliamentary conduct of his father respecting America, as perfectly consistent. The Earl had always heartily reprobated the principle, progress, and ultimate objects of the war, and never gave a vote or opinion in contradiction to those sentiments. The only observation of Lord Chatham, on which a contrary inference could be founded, was an assertion that Great Britain had a right to impose duties for regulation of commerce, duties incidental to the extension of trade, calculated for the mutual benefit of both countries; but not a tax for raising a revenue in America, to be remitted to England and disposed of by Parliament.

After explaining his father's sentiments, Mr. Pitt stated his own. The American war had been defended, he said, with uncommon fervour: one member, in the heat of his zeal, had termed it a holy war, and several others had been reprehended for calling it a wicked or accursed war. For his part, he would affirm it to be a most accursed, wicked, barbarous,

* 106 to 72.

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cruel, unnatural, unjust, and diabolical war; conceived in injustice, nurtured and brought forth in folly; its footsteps marked with blood, slaughter, persecution, and devastation. It contained every characteristic of moral depravity and human turpitude, was pregnant with every species of mischief, and threatened with destruction the miserable people who were the object of those black resentments by which it was engendered. The mischiefs, however, recoiled on the unhappy people of England, who were made the instruments to effect these wicked purposes. The nation was drained of its best blood and its vital resources in men and money. The expense was enormous, the return nothing but a series of ineffective victories or disgraceful defeats; victories only celebrated with momentary triumph over our brethren, or defeats which filled the land with mourning for the loss of dear and valuable relations, slain in the impious contest for enforcing unconditional submission; or narratives of the glorious exertions of men struggling in the holy cause of liberty, even amidst all difficulties and disadvantages. What Englishman, on reading the narratives of these bloody and well-fought contests, could refrain from lamenting the loss of British blood in such a cause? or from weeping on whichever side victory might incline? To this melancholy consideration might be added, that we perceived only our natural and powerful enemies, or lukewarm and faithless friends, rejoicing in our calamities and meditating our ultimate downfall. The motion was negatived*.

June 20—29. Petitions of American prisoners.

A petition was presented to the House of Commons from upward of two hundred Americans confined in the Mill Prison at Plymouth, representing their calamitous, half-starved condition. They had less bread every day by one-third than was allowed to captives of France, Spain, and Holland, and their clothing was utterly insufficient. Other prisoners were enabled to supply their wants by annuities allowed from their respective governments and paid through their agents; but as there were no American agents,

* 172 to 99.

they could receive no such relief, and must have undergone greater privations than they had, but for the subscriptions of the humane and generous persons in England, which were now nearly exhausted.

It was proved that the daily allowance they complained of was, a pound of bread, three quarters of a pound of meat, half a pint of pease, or green vegetables in proportion, half an ounce of butter or cheese, and a pot of beer; a distribution considerably greater than was afforded to our own troops in transports, and much exceeding that which could be procured by the hard work of the daily labourer. It had been regulated before the war with France began, on the precedent of the allowance to rebel prisoners in 1745; but with more liberality. Some motions which were attempted on the subject failed*; nor would the debate be worth mention, but for some remarkable observations to which it gave rise. The treatment of our prisoners by the Americans being adverted to, General Burgoyne affirmed, that, while he lay at Cambridge, he had many causes of complaint respecting the treatment his troops had experienced, but not on the score of provisions. The honourable General could hardly have retained a correct recollection of the sufferings of his brave and unfortunate followers, the convention army; and his memory was refreshed by Lord George Germaine, who stated that many such complaints had been made by this army while the General was with it, and still more since he had quitted it; that every post which arrived from America brought letters filled with complaints of the barbarities to which they were subjected.

Mr. Fox declared that he considered the American cause the cause of freedom, of the constitution, and of whiggism, and had in its origin sincerely wished it success. If he had been an American, he believed he knew himself well enough to think he should not have been inactive; but being an Englishman, he had considered it his duty, as it was his inclination, to continue his efforts in an ardent opposition

* A motion for an address made by Mr. Fox was rejected, 75 to 28. Several others made by ministers, were carried without division.

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to those sanguinary measures that had involved us in this war, and which, being hostile to freedom, he considered contrary to the true interests of his country. He gloried in having always adhered to whig principles, and, as a consequence of that way of thinking, to the claims of America.

Mr. Dundas was not surprised at the rejoicing expressed by Mr. Fox at the successes of our enemies; he had not slightly contributed to them by his language and conduct in that house; and, in a tone of less bitterness, the Solicitor-General asked if he meant to confine himself to bare wishes, or to draw the sword, put on the American uniform, inlist under Washington, and point his sword against the bosom of his own countrymen? Lord North declared that, if Mr. Fox's was a true exposition of Whig principles, he was a staunch Tory, for they went to no less than establishing a power in every individual to renounce his allegiance at pleasure; a power absolutely incompatible with the existence of any society in the world. He examined the application of Whig principles to our conduct with regard to America, shewing that it was reconcileable with the opinions of Lord Somers and every other great character of that party.

18th July. Close of the session.

The King terminated the session at an unusually advanced period; thanking Parliament for the faithful discharge of their duties, and expressing his earnest desire of peace, though he would not accept that blessing on terms inconsistent with the honour and dignity of the Crown, and the permanent interest and security of the people.

CHAPTER THE FORTY-SECOND.

1781.

Attack of the French on Jersey.—Progress of the siege of Gibraltar. — Misery, and relief of the garrison. — Brave sortie.—The enemy land in Minorca.—Naval actions in the Channel—and off the Dogger Bank.—State of the Dutch Colonies—Instructions to Rodney.—Capture of Saint Eustatia—Demerary — Issequibo, and Berbice.—The French fleet reinforced.—Capture of Tobago. — Transactions in America.—Lord Cornwallis reinforced.—State of the American army.—Mutiny.—Arnold's expedition to Virginia.—Tarleton defeated at the Cowpens.—Lord Cornwallis's incursion into North Carolina.—Royal standard erected at Hillsborough.—Massacre of the Loyalists.—Battle of Guildford.—Lord Cornwallis invades Virginia.—Lord Rawdon defeats the enemy at Hobkirk's Hill.—Camden evacuated. —Success of the enemy in South Carolina and Georgia.—Suspension of operations.—Execution of Colonel Haynes. —Battle at Eutaws.—Expedition of the enemy against Portsmouth.—General Phillips ravages Virginia.—Arrival of Lord Cornwallis.—His pursuit of La Fayette.—Success of Tarleton and Simcoe.—Projects of the enemy against New York.—Clinton requires troops from Virginia.—Countermands the order.—Lord Cornwallis stations himself at York and Gloucester.—Arrival of the French—and English fleets.—Partial action.—Arnold's expedition to New London.—York town invested.—Progress of the siege—and capitulation.—Efforts of Clinton for relief of Lord Cornwallis.

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1781. 6th January.

EARLY in 1781, the French made a spirited attempt to gain possession of Jersey. The remainder of the legion which had failed in 1779, with another, raised

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1781. Attack of the French on Jersey.

by the Prince de Luxembourg, were placed under the command of the Baron de Rullecourt. After sustaining some loss and many difficulties by tempest, the Baron landed with eight hundred men at the Banc des Violettes; reached, during night, St. Helier's, the capital, and took prisoner, Major Corbet, the Lieutenant-Governor, who signed a capitulation for the whole island. Fortunately, other officers were not infected with the same spirit of timidity: Major Pierson, on whom the command devolved, collected the troops, assailed the invaders, who were concentred in the market-place, wounded Rullecourt, slew a considerable number, and compelled the remainder to surrender; but he did not survive to enjoy the fruits of his valour; almost the last shot fired by the enemy deprived him of life, and he fell in the prime of youth, and in the moment of glory. Corbet was tried by a court-martial, and deservedly sentenced to be superseded in his commission of Lieutenant-Governor*.

6th June.

Progress of the siege of Gibraltar.

1780. 7th June.

Meanwhile the Spaniards continued to direct a great portion of their strength against Gibraltar. After the departure of Admiral Rodney, they attempted, by means of fire-ships, to burn the fleet in the bay; but were repulsed by the valour and judgment of the British sailors, assisted by a well-directed fire from the garrison. Notwithstanding this failure, they formed a blockade; and the probabilities of relief were diminished by a successful negotiation with the Emperor of Morocco for farming the ports of Tangier, Tetuan, and Larache, from which supplies and information had been hitherto frequently obtained. This advantage was gained by the Spaniards in consequence of a blameable negligence in the British ministry. On the commencement of hostilities, proposals were made to the Emperor of Morocco for farming these ports; but far from acceding to a proposition so injurious to the English, he imparted it to General Elliot, requiring only, as the price of his friendship, naval stores for three vessels, to protect his coasts against the incensed Spaniards, the value of which did not exceed

* Histories, periodical works, and gazettes; Life of General Dumouriez, vol. i. p. 445.

fifteen hundred pounds. Elliot, struck with this disinterestedness, advised the British Government to double the Emperor's demand, in order to retain so valuable a friend; but he had the mortification, on Admiral Rodney's arrival, to find that he brought no answer to the request. Ample time was afterward allowed for the ministry to repair their oversight; but, after repeated applications to the British Consul to learn the success of his applications, the Moorish monarch gradually withdrew his countenance and protection. He first permitted the Spaniards to capture British vessels within his ports; his officers answering the remonstrances of Mr. Logie, the Consul, with harshness and insult. He next commanded Mr. Logie to be conducted into his presence, and, after reproaching the English nation in terms of great bitterness, ordered him to make his abode at Sallee. The Consul had the address to soften his resentment, and even obtained a temporary protection for his fellow-subjects; but the Spaniards still augmenting their offers, while no counter proposal was made by the British ministry, the Emperor, at length, consented to banish the subjects of England from his dominions. Unmoved by entreaties and remonstrances, he even increased his severity by alienating the port of Tangier to Spain; in consequence of which, the Consul and all the English were made prisoners, and treated with great inhumanity, till the Court of Madrid consented to their release.

20th October.

26th Nov.

Distress of the garrison.

This event was a severe misfortune to the besieged, who had almost consumed the supplies brought by Rodney; the Spaniards intercepted small vessels from Minorca and other ports, and destroyed the gardens without the lines. The scurvy made dreadful ravages, and the garrison experienced excessive misery*.

* As a proof of the extreme distress of the garrison during this period, the following are selected from a long list of articles which had advanced to prices proportionately exorbitant. Fresh beef, veal, and mutton, 4*s.* 10½*d.*; corned beef, 2*s.* 11*d.*; potatoes, 2*s.* 6*d.*; sugar, 17*s.* 1*d.*; and biscuit-dust from 10*d.* to 1*s.* per pound. The hind quarter of a sheep, with the head and tail, 7*l.* 10*s.*; a pint of milk and water, 1*s.* 3*d.*; a living pig, 9*l.* 14*s.* 9*d.*; a sow, large with pigs, 20*l.*; a goat and kid, 13*l.*; a milch cow, 50 guineas, reserving to the vendor a

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1781. 12th April. Relieved by Darby.

From this extremity of wretchedness they were relieved by Admiral Darby, who convoyed, with the grand fleet, near a hundred ships laden with provisions. The garrison had been apprised of his approach, and at day-break his fleet was descried from the signal-house, though not yet discernible from below, by reason of a thick mist; but when the rising sun dispersed the vapour, the anxious garrison were gratified with the view of the whole convoy, led by several men of war, steering toward them in a compact body. The stores were landed in spite of opposition from the Spanish gun-boats and land batteries, and Darby, having completed his task, sailed for the channel.

The town bombarded.

The joy of the garrison and inhabitants immediately received a severe check; for the fleet was scarcely moored, when the Spaniards opened a heavy battery and bombardment on the fortress and town. The fire impaired the fortifications, brought down large quantities of stone and rubbish from the rock, which blocked up the way and rendered repairs difficult, and, by destroying the dwellings and warehouses, laid open those stores of provision which the merchants had amassed to deal out in scanty portions, and at exorbitant prices. The soldiery indulged in licentious plunder and wanton destruction; drunkenness and insubordination threatened fatal effects, but were suppressed by a judicious mixture of temporary forbearance and subsequent wholesome severity.

The Spaniards now appeared to have renounced all thoughts of a blockade; provisions were received without restraint, and a second convoy from England, under the command of Captain Curtis, quieted every apprehension. But the heavy cannonades, and profuse discharges of shells, both from batteries and gun-boats, daily harassed the garrison, while the works of

pint of milk per diem. The weekly allowance of the soldier (and many had children to maintain out of it) was 5 pounds and a quarter of bread; 13 oz. of salt beef; 13 oz. of pork, both almost in a state of putrescence; 2 oz. and a quarter of butter, little better than rancid oil; 12 oz. of raisins; half a pint of pease; a pint of Spanish beans; a pint of wheat, which they ground into flour for puddings; 4 oz. of rice, and a quarter of a pint of oil: the inhabitants had no assistance from the stores.

the besiegers proceeded with an alarming rapidity. As a protection against the gun and mortar boats, General Elliot cut down some brigs, and converted them into *prames* furnished with artillery. His judicious and well-directed fire did tremendous execution, blew up batteries and prostrated works; but the diligence and perseverance of the besiegers still enabled them to continue their approaches; and, notwithstanding every opposition, their fourth line was completed, within three quarters of a mile of the walls, and so strong as to resist the fire of the garrison.

12th April to 31st May.

Fewer lives were lost in these tremendous assaults than would naturally be imagined, as, in a period of fifty days of the most violent attack on the town and garrison, during which the enemy were computed to expend fifty-six thousand seven hundred and sixty shot, and twenty thousand one hundred and thirty-four shells, not more than seventy were killed and wounded. The troops were accustomed, after six months bombardment, to the discharge and effect of heavy artillery; the firing of the enemy had shewn the weak places in the fortification, which the Governor and engineers were indefatigable in strengthening, so that the garrison was in fact in a better state of defence than at the beginning of the attack.

26th Nov. Successful sortie.

To free himself from the contiguity of the enemy, General Elliot executed a bold and fortunate enterprize. Having received, from a deserter, correct information of the position, strength, and guards of the enemy, he ordered all the grenadiers and light infantry of the garrison, together with the twelfth regiment, and the German regiment, called Hardenberg's*, to assemble on the sands at midnight, and assail those stupendous works, the construction of which had cost so much labour and expense. With laudable prudence, the General kept his intentions profoundly secret till after sun-set on the evening when they were to be executed: the remaining interval was past

* It was a remarkable circumstance that these two regiments, subjects of different powers, and selected for this service, fought side by side at the battle of Minden.

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in consultation, and the arrangement of measures for ensuring success. The detachment consisted of two thousand and fourteen men, besides three hundred sailors; they were commanded by Brigadier-General Ross; but the valiant Governor of the garrison attended in person. Although his orders to observe profound silence were strictly obeyed, the enemy were alarmed, and their sentries fired on the detachment. The British troops, having now no resource but their impetuous courage, pressed resolutely forward; the Spaniards fled in every direction; and, in an hour, by the vigour and skill of the pioneers and artillerymen, the flames burst forth from every quarter of the works, illuminating the troops and all the surrounding objects with a grand and horrific glare. The detachment regained the fortress in safety, after laying trains to the magazines, which threw up large masses of timber in their explosion, and augmented the conflagration. The Spaniards made no effort to protect their works or prevent retreat; they were so little apprehensive of a sortie, that the report of the commanding officer was found already written against the relief of guard, declaring that "nothing extraordinary" had happened. The loss sustained by the British consisted in four privates killed, one lieutenant, with twenty-four non-commissioned officers and privates wounded, and one missing; and great part of this casualty was occasioned by two of the divisions firing on each other in the dark, by mistake. Ten thirteen-inch mortars, and eighteen twenty-six pounders were spiked in the works, and the deliberation and order observed were so perfect, that neither musket, working tool, nor any other implement was lost. The success exceeded the most sanguine expectation, and justified the expression of the General in his public orders, that "the bravery and conduct of the whole detachment, "officers, sailors, and soldiers, on the glorious occasion, "surpassed his warmest acknowledgments."

The enemy land in Minorca.

While the Spaniards were exerting their force in unavailing attempts on Gibraltar, they also undertook, in conjunction with the French, the conquest of Mi-

norca. With a combined force of sixteen thousand men, commanded by the Duke De Crillon, and a suitable train of artillery, they effected a landing, and commenced the siege of St. Philip's Castle, the principal fortress of the island; but their progress was not commensurate to their expectations, and the year was wasted in unsuccessful efforts.

20th August.

Naval actions in the Channel.

After convoying this armament, the combined fleets, amounting to seventy sail, fifty of which were of the line, and some of the largest rate, reached the coast of England, and occupied the mouth of the Channel, from the islands of Scilly to Ushant. The destruction of the English marine was confidently expected; but Admiral Darby, having received information of the approach and strength of the enemy, prudently retired, with only twenty-one sail of the line, into Torbay, to await an attack. The French and Spanish commanders differed in opinion; and, in a council of war, the proposition to assail the English squadron in harbour was overruled by a large majority. After some unavailing attempts to intercept the homeward bound trade, this mighty armament was, at an early period of the year, compelled, by the sickness of the crews, and the miserable state of the ships, to return to port without effecting any exploit worthy of notice. Admiral Darby, reinforced to thirty sail of the line, cruised with so much vigilance and success, that the British trade was secure from molestation.

September.

Engagement between Parker and Zouttman, 5th August.

In the course of the year, many naval events occurred highly honourable to the naval character of the nation. Admiral Hyde Parker, returning from the Baltic with a convoy, was encountered near the Dogger Bank by the Dutch Admiral Zouttman, commanding a force considerably superior, both in number and condition. The Dutch did not, like their new allies, the French and Spaniards, avoid an engagement; but, both Admirals having taken the necessary measures for the safety of their convoys, an action was commenced, in which skill, judgment, and valour, were equally conspicuous on either side. They did not fire

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till within musket shot, and continued with unremitting fury three hours and a half. The fleets lay to for some time, repairing their damages, when the Dutch Admiral bore away, unopposed, for the Texel, Parker not being in a condition to attempt pursuit. Both squadrons suffered severely; the English lost one hundred and four killed, and three hundred and thirty-nine wounded: the Dutch did not publish their official return, but their killed and wounded were calculated at twelve hundred. Their ships were dreadfully shattered; the Hollandia sunk in the night after the engagement, with all her wounded on board, and the rest could with difficulty be kept above water till they reached the port. Although no advantage of capture resulted to the British fleet, the glory of victory was theirs, and the Dutch convoy was unable to proceed on its voyage. The brave Admiral, on his return to the Nore, received the honour of a royal visit on board his ship; but no acts of civility or condescension could alter his resolution of resigning his command, which was imputed to indignation at the insufficiency and bad condition of his fleet.

State of the Dutch colonies.

It arose probably from the divided state of the Dutch government, where an active and malignant faction was directing a system not directly avowed by the great council of the nation, that when, by unprovoked aggressions and perfidious proceedings, they became involved in war, no adequate measures had been taken for the security of their colonial possessions, or the protection of their ill-gotten riches. They seemed to rely, in indolent security, on the passive forbearance of England; that she was not, either by injuries or insults, to be roused into hostile action. Such expectations, if ever they were indulged, were sure to be dispelled when naval command was confided to the ardent and uncompromising patriotism, secrecy, and indefatigable activity of Sir George Rodney. Before

1780. August.

hostilities had been formally commenced, he had shewn his high sense of British honour. Finding, on his arrival in the West Indies, that St. Eustatia was the depot of the commerce and the refuge of the

cruisers belonging to the Americans, that at St. Martin's their flag was acknowledged and honoured, and one of their armed vessels permitted, even in the port, to insult and menace an English ship of smaller size, he dispatched a squadron of sufficient force to seize or destroy the Americans, conveying, at the same time, a message to the Dutch Governor, announcing his determination to exact and enforce the respect due to his Majesty's flag. The commission was promptly and ably executed; the Governor, acknowledging his error, promised that he would no longer permit the display of the rebel flag; the Americans, wishing to give a different aspect to the transaction, artfully proposed to Captain Robinson, who commanded the detachment, that he should take from the island three hundred hogsheads of tobacco, which they had landed, but not sold to the Dutch; he frustrated their insidious design, saying that his Majesty's ships were sent to chastise their insolence, not to seize their tobacco, or make war with the subjects of Holland.

1780. Dec. 20th. Instructions to Rodney.

Aware of the use which the enemies of England had been enabled to make of St. Eustatia, ministers lost no time in directing the capture of that island. Rodney and General Vaughan, having already made a fruitless attempt to re-capture St. Vincent's, obeyed these directions promptly and with cautious secrecy. They sailed from St. Lucie; and, for a feint, appeared before St. Pierre's in Martinique, where they occasioned great, though unfounded alarm. They caused St. Eustatia to be so surrounded that no vessels were likely to escape; and, having made all proper dispositions for attack, summoned the Governor to surrender the island. De Graaf, who, notwithstanding the fair professions of the States-General, retained the command of the island, feeling that the inhabitants, composed of almost all trading nations, could not be combined in views of defence, which the consternation of so sudden an attack rendered hopeless, surrendered the island, with its dependencies, St. Martin's and Saba, and the victors possessed themselves of an immense treasure. No small indignation was excited by a discovery that

Jan. 30th.

Capture of St. Eustatia. Feb. 3rd.

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much of the merchandise was the property of British subjects, and apparently intended for the use of the enemy. Under the influence of this impression, the Admiral rejected with disdain the application of the merchants of St. Christopher's, the nearest English island, enforced by Mr. Glanville, their Solicitor-General, for a restitution. His severity was supposed to exceed the limits of justice, and became the source of much subsequent litigation*. Beside the property on shore, valued at four millions, a frigate of thirty-six guns, five ships of war of inferior force, and a hundred and fifty sail of merchant-men, were taken in the bay, and a fleet of thirty sail, richly laden, with their convoy, a sixty-four, were pursued and captured, after a resistance in which the Dutch Admiral, Count Byland, was slain. The flag of Holland was kept for some time flying; and, by means of this decoy, several French, American, and Dutch vessels became an easy prey.

The capture of this place, Sir George Rodney observed, has distressed the French islands beyond conception. They are greatly in want of every species of provisions and stores. He proposed therefore to make a blockade as effectual as possible, but professed his apprehension of danger from the British islands, whose merchants, regardless of the duty they owed to their country, had already contracted with the enemy to supply them with provisions and naval stores†. Of this conduct, which he properly terms villainy, the brave Admiral made frequent and unreserved complaints; but, although he was rigorous in seizing, and inexorable in retaining stores and merchandizes which belonged to this class of speculators, private property was, in all cases, most strictly respected, nor was plunder or waste of any kind permitted. Yet all the results of this acquisition were not advantageous to England; the necessity of disposing of the merchandise facilitated purchases by the subjects of neutral powers, who, notwithstanding every precaution, conveyed the articles to the enemy at a cheaper rate, and in greater plenty,

* See the papers in the Remembrancer, vol. xi. p. 293, 317, 342.
† Life of Lord Rodney, vol. ii. p. 55.

than they could otherwise have been procured. The captured treasure was dispatched to Europe with a convoy under Commodore Hotham; but twenty-five of the ships were taken by a French squadron under De la Motte Piquet; and thus the wealth of St. Eustatia continued to enrich the enemy. When about to quit the island, Rodney wrote that it was put into a state almost impregnable; that, instead of the greatest emporium on earth, it would be a mere desert, known only by report. "Yet," he added, "this rock, of only "six miles in length and three in breadth, has done "England more harm than all the arms of her most "potent enemies; it has alone supported the Ameri-"can rebellion." The island itself was surrendered to the French, toward the end of the year, in a most dishonourable manner, by Colonel Cockburn*.

May 2nd.

26 Nov.

Another attack on the property of the Dutch was made by a squadron of privateers, mostly equipped from Bristol; who, boldly entering the most difficult rivers of Demerary and Issequibo, captured, under the very guns of the forts, several vessels of considerable value. The terrified inhabitants immediately surrendered these settlements, together with the island of Berbice, to the governor of Barbadoes; they claimed only the terms allowed to St. Eustatia, but were treated with much greater lenity.

Demerary and Issequibo. 14 Mar.

Meanwhile a French fleet of twenty-five ships of the line, and one of fifty guns, sailed from Brest, commanded by De Suffrein and De Grasse; they had on board six thousand land forces, and convoyed a merchant fleet of nearly three hundred sail. Twenty of

22 March. The French reinforced.

* This most useful and important conquest, which ought to have produced to the illustrious Admiral nothing but public honours and unbounded wealth, was made to bear fruits widely different. Documents, proving the delinquency of the treacherous traders, having fallen into his hands, after the capture of the island, he transmitted them to England, and they were safely lodged in the office of the Secretary of State. In some of the subsequent changes of administration, they were lost, removed, or destroyed. Emboldened by this subtraction of the proofs of their delinquency, many of the parties, to the amount of ninety, it is said, brought actions against him, and some heavy verdicts were recovered. Under the impression of the first attack, Rodney declared that he expected soon to find himself two hundred thousand pounds worse than nothing. Letter from Mr. Wilkes to his daughter, 4th July, 1786, in Longman's publication, vol. iii. p. 178. In the general narrative, I have relied on the able and judicious biography of Lord Rodney by Major General Mundy, vol. ii. p. 1 to 100.

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the vessels of the line, and the fifty-gun ship, proceeded for Fort Royal in Martinique, where a junction with the French fleet already in that quarter would give a decided superiority over the British force. Admiral Rodney detached Sir Samuel Hood and Admiral Drake, with seventeen sail of the line, to cruise off Port Royal Bay, for the purpose of intercepting the French admiral; an engagement took place, but although the French were augmented by reinforcements to a majority of six, they remained at so great a distance, that not one in ten of their shot took effect. Some of the British ships, attempting to press into closer action, suffered severely; but the contest was, on the whole, undecisive, and unimportant.

29 April. Partial engagement.

Capture of Tobago by the French. 10 May. 29 May.

On the arrival of the Russel at St. Eustatia, in a shattered condition, Sir George Rodney speedily completed his repairs, and proceeded to Barbadoes. The French commanders, having failed in an attack on St. Lucie, were engaged in the reducion of Tobago. Rodney with his whole fleet came in sight of their squadron; but, although they no longer shewed their usual disposition to avoid an engagement, and he had the advantage of wind, prudential reasons justified him in declining a contest attended with great risk and little probable advantage. The island was valiantly defended and judiciously reinforced, and De Bouillé only effected its reduction by the inhuman and unmilitary practice of burning four plantations every day until the governor capitulated. This conquest terminated the military operations of the year in the West Indies; and the French fleet being augmented by five sail of the line at Hispaniola, De Grasse proceeded to the Chesapeak, while Rodney returned to Europe to recruit his health, which had suffered severely from his incessant vigilance and laborious exertions: the command of the fleet was left to Sir Samuel Hood.

2 June.

5 Aug.

Transactions in America.

The transactions on the continent of America since the close of the last campaign in the Carolinas, had been highly momentous. The spirit of disaffection, which received a rude shock by the victory at Camden, was revived by the defeat of Major Ferguson; Lord

1780.

Cornwallis, though alarmed for the safety of South Carolina, obtained from Virginia a reinforcement of two thousand six hundred men, under General Leslie, with whose assistance he still pursued his project of penetrating into North Carolina.

19th of Dec. Lord Cornwallis reinforced.

The aspect of affairs in the American army was at this time peculiarly discouraging; it is thus described by General Washington. "Instead of having "magazines filled with provisions, we have a scanty "pittance scattered here and there in the different "states; instead of having our arsenals well supplied "with military stores, they are poorly provided, and "the workmen all leaving them; instead of having the "various articles of field equipage in readiness to be "delivered, the Quarter-Master-General, as the dernier "resort, acording to his account, is but now applying "to the several states to provide these things for their "troops respectively; instead of having a regular "system of transportation established upon credit, or "funds in the Quarter-Master's hands to defray the "contingent expenses of it, we have neither the one "nor the other; and all that business, or a great part "of it, being done by military impress, we are daily "and hourly oppressing the people, souring their tem-"per, and alienating their affections; instead of hav-"ing the regiments completed to the new establish-"ment, which ought to have been done agreeably to "the requisitions of Congress, scarcely any state in the "Union has at this hour an eighth part of its quota "in the field, and little prospect that I can see of ever "getting more than half; in a word, instead of hav-"ing every thing in readiness to take the field, we "have nothing; and instead of having the prospect "of a glorious offensive campaign before us, we have "a bewildered and gloomy defensive one, unless we "should receive a powerful aid of ships, land troops, "and money, from our generous allies; and these at "present are too contingent to build upon*."

State of the American army.

1781.

To increase the gloom which these circumstances

Jan. 1. Mutiny.

* Sparks's Life of Washington, vol. ii. p. 191.

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were calculated to create, a formidable spirit of mutiny displayed itself. The Pennsylvania troops stationed near Morristown, to the amount of thirteen hundred, paraded under arms, refused to obey their officers, killed two captains, and marched off with six field pieces, declaring their intention to demand from Congress at Philadelphia a redress of their grievances. They complained of the hardships and privations they endured with respect to provisions and clothing, and the retention of their pay, which was either withheld altogether, or issued in a currency so depreciated, that it bore only a nominal value. Many also claimed a right to quit the service, because the term for which they had engaged was expired. By the agreement for inlisting, they were to serve "three years, or during "the war." The ambiguity of this phrase, whether designed or accidental, led to a diversity of opinion, the officers insisted that the soldiers were bound to serve to the end of the war, while they contended that in no case were they engaged for more than three years, but the period might be shortened by the termination of hostilities. Troops at New Jersey shewed a similar disposition to revolt, and the authority of Congress appeared to be in the utmost danger. Strong representations were made to Sir Henry Clinton and to ministers at home of a general disposition in the colonies to abandon the cause in which much oppression and privation were to be endured, and to regain a situation in which so much real good had been experienced, and none but speculative evils incurred.

Incited by these representations, and hoping to derive advantage from this critical revolt, Sir Henry Clinton offered protection and pardon, with a full liquidation of all demands, to those who would join him, stipulating only for allegiance and submission to the British Government; nor was their service, unless voluntarily tendered, to be required in the royal army. Far from yielding to these allurements, the mutineers gave up the British emissaries to General Wayne, by whom they were executed as spies. Congress sent commissioners to negotiate an arrangement, mutual

concessions were made, and half the revolters re-entered the American ranks*.

1781. Arnold's expedition into Virginia.

Incited by the state of General Washington's army, and the desire of making a diversion beneficial to Lord Cornwallis, Sir Henry Clinton had dispatched General Arnold, at the head of eighteen hundred men, to establish a post at Portsmouth, on Elizabeth river, and to make an excursion into Virginia, to occupy the natives on that side, so as to favour Lord Cornwallis's retreat, should circumstances render it necessary. He was instructed only to strike at the enemy's magazines, if he could affect them without too much risk, and to conciliate the inhabitants by liberal proclamations. With a laudable prudence, which, however, subsequent events proved to be unnecessary, Clinton sent, with General Arnold, Lieutenant-colonels Dundas and Simcoe, recommending them as officers of great experience and merit, in whom he placed implicit confidence, and with whom Arnold was enjoined to consult on every operation of consequence. Lord Cornwallis was also apprized of the extent and motives of this expedition, and invested with power to supersede Arnold in the command. That brave officer, arriving with only a thousand men in Hampton Road, proceeded up James river, and, in the course of a few days, destroyed a valuable cannon foundry, a large quantity of public stores, and many vessels richly laden in James and Appomatox rivers, and established the required post at Portsmouth†. The events in the American army facilitated Arnold's progress, by preventing Washington from sending detachments to oppose him.

30th of Dec.

State of the armies.

Such was the general result of operations designed to favour Lord Cornwallis. When that nobleman commenced the campaign, General Greene was encamped near Hick's Creek, on the east side of the

* The phrase used by the Americans in rejecting Clinton's offers, was, "No, we will not turn *Arnolds*;" an expression of more force than those who uttered it were aware; for Arnold had been most strenuous in recommending the encouragement of revolt by large promises and liberal treatment. The general facts are derived from the Histories, from Sparks's Life of Washington, and documents in the Sate Paper Office.

† Jefferson's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 200

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Pedee, with a force consisting only of two thousand three hundred and seven men, of whom more than half were militia. The General himself describes his army as "rather a shadow than a substance, having "only an imaginary existence. Artillery, baggage, "stores, every thing had gone by the board on the "fatal day of the recent defeat, and it now was become "indispensable to obtain a new supply of almost every "article that an army could want*;" while Lord Cornwallis had under his command, at Wynnesborough and adjacent places, five thousand five hundred regulars, beside a numerous militia.

Tarleton defeated at the Cowpens.

General Greene detached five hundred and forty men, under General Morgan, to gain the western frontier of South Carolina, and threaten the British post at Ninety-six, while the remaining force alarmed the country in front of Camden. Preparatory to his invasion of North Carolina, Lord Cornwallis detached Colonel Tarleton with one thousand men against Morgan; and to favour this design, himself moved

17th January.

toward Turkey Creek, but was prevented from effectual co-operation. Tarleton, after a fatiguing march, found the enemy at a place called the Cowpens, augmented by reinforcements to an equality in point of numbers with himself, but inferior in cavalry. He attacked them with his usual impetuosity, and, having defeated the first and second line, was in hopes of a complete victory. Some mistake, however, appears to have prevented the charge of the British cavalry in time to hinder the Americans from rallying; they became in their turn the assailants, drove back the fatigued and unsupported infantry; terror spread on every side; the legion cavalry disgracefully fled, regardless of repeated commands, while the infantry were slain or captured to the number of seven hundred. Colonel Tarleton himself, at the head of fourteen officers and about forty men of the seventeenth regiment of dragoons, cut his way through the opposing cavalry, and reached Lord Cornwallis. The Americans gained

* Life of General Greene, vol. i. p. 328.

great honour by this important and unexpected victory, and the defeat was additionally distressing to the British army, as it was attended with the irreparable loss of all the light troops.

29th January. Lord Cornwallis pursues Morgan.

This disaster, injurious and portentous as it was, did not deter Lord Cornwallis from invading North Carolina. Animated by the hope of recapturing General Morgan's prisoners, he rapidly advanced toward the Catawba; but, finding his march retarded by his baggage, caused all that exceeded the limits of the most strict necessity to be destroyed. He reached the banks of the river two hours after the American General had crossed; but in that small interval, a rise of the water prevented his passage, and afforded time for Morgan to send forward his prisoners to Virginia, and collect the militia to dispute the fords. General Greene, judging this crisis worthy of his personal interference, ordered his army to join Morgan by forced marches, and himself repaired to the shores of the Catawba with still greater expedition, riding a hundred and sixty miles across the country. Although the river was nearly five hundred yards wide, and the fords defended by strong bodies of the enemy, Lord Cornwallis passed, with only four killed and thirty-six wounded. Colonel Tarleton was dispatched in pursuit of the retreating militia; and the cavalry under his command, by gallantly routing five hundred men at Tarrant's Tavern, retrieved a portion of the honour, though they could not regain the advantages, lost at the Cowpens.

29th.

31st January.

2nd February. Passes the Catawba.

Arrives at,

From the Catawba the British army pursued the enemy to the Yadkin, a march, or rather a race of thirty-eight miles, rendered extremely difficult by bad roads and swelled creeks, and a severe and rainy winter. The British troops bore with heroic fortitude the privation of spirits, and even of food; but fortune again rescued the flying foe from their grasp, by an almost miraculous fall of the Yadkin to facilitate the passage of the fugitives, while that of the pursuers was impeded by a sudden rise. Without any violent stretch of superstition, the Americans considered this

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event as a sign that their cause was favoured by Heaven*.

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and crosses the Yadkin.

The two divisions of the American army now effected a junction, and the British Commander still hoped to impede their retreat into Virginia, though, from the state of the river, he could not cross without a circuitous march of fifty miles. He was deceived by reports of difficulties in passing the River Dan; but after a vigorous and incessant pursuit, he had the mortification to find that the enemy had effected their retreat without impediment. General Greene acquired great applause by his activity, judgment, and intelligence.

The enemy retreat into Virginia.

Royal standard erected at Hillsborough.

Disappointed in the main object of his pursuit, Lord Cornwallis returned by slow marches to Hillsborough, where he erected the royal standard, and, by proclamation, invited all loyal subjects to join him in arms, and with ten days provisions†. Although the loyalists of North Carolina had been greatly diminished and depressed by persecutions, General Greene repassed the Dan to prevent the effects of the proclamation. Colonel Pyle had collected a body of nearly three hundred loyalists, for whose protection Colonel Tarleton was detached, with the cavalry and a small body of infantry. At the same time, Greene dispatched Lieutenant-Colonel Lee, to prevent the junction of this corps with the British army. The loyalists, meeting Lee's detachment, and mistaking them for friends, were surrounded, and, although they implored quarter on their knees, were all inhumanly butchered.

24th February. Massacre of the loyalists.

25th Feb.

Further retreat of Lord Cornwallis.

The re-appearance of the Americans in North Carolina, impeded the supplies of the British army; and, the country being nearly exhausted, Lord Cornwallis retreated to a new position on Allamance Creek, between Haw and Deep rivers. This measure, though dictated by imperious necessity, did not escape censure; as the period limited in the proclamation for the junction of the loyalists, which had subjected the most zealous to punishment for having indiscreetly shewn

* Holmes's American Annals, vol. ii. p. 362.

† Many came in, but, seeing the distressed state of the British army, retired.

their attachment to the British cause, was not yet expired; they afterward reluctantly joined the army. The Americans advancing as Lord Cornwallis retired, an ineffectual attempt was made to beat up their quarters; General Greene, though greatly superior in numbers, cautiously avoiding an engagement till the arrival of expected reinforcements. 6th March.

At length, having received all his supplies, and chosen an advantageous position, near Guilford court-house, he offered battle, and the British Commander, with an army reduced to less than two thousand men, eagerly advanced to the conflict against five thousand. The engagement, which was long, and maintained with determined valour on both sides, terminated in a glorious and honourable victory of the British troops; but the commander had to lament the loss of nearly one-third of his force, five hundred and thirty-two being killed, wounded, and missing, including several meritorious and esteemed officers. His troops were exhausted with the fatigue of a long march, unprovided with tents, and so miserably destitute of provisions, that their allowance on the ensuing day amounted to no more than a quarter of a pound of flour, and the same quantity of lean beef. The night was dark and tempestuous, the rain fell in torrents on the unprotected, fatigued, and famishing troops, while the cries of the wounded and dying aggravated the horrors of the scene. 15th March. Battle of Guildford.

General Greene retreated to the iron-works on Troublesome Creek; but Lord Cornwallis, finding pursuit impossible, retired by easy marches toward Cross Creek, leaving seventy of his wounded, under a flag of truce, to the humanity of the enemy. Before his departure he issued a proclamation, reciting his victory, calling on all loyal subjects to return to government, and promising protection and pardon to those who obeyed. Far from being able to afford assistance to others, he found that Cross Creek could not supply his followers with necessaries; they were worn down by the hardships and fatigues of a march of six hundred miles, in which they had forded several wide Lord Cornwallis retreats to Wilmington.

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rivers and numberless creeks, several of which would, in any other country, be reckoned large rivers, without tents or covering against the climate, and often without provisions. He found himself, therefore, compelled

7th April. to a further retreat, and preferred Wilmington, a seaport, to Camden, where Lord Rawdon was threatened with an attack.

He invades Virginia. After pursuing for some time the track of the retreating army, General Greene marched toward Camden, while Lord Cornwallis, embarrassed with a choice of difficulties, and his force reduced to fourteen hundred and thirty-five men, took advantage of Greene's

29th April. absence to proceed through North Carolina to Virginia.

Lord Rawdon defeats the enemy at Hobkirk's Hill. Lord Rawdon was unapprized of the enemy's approach; and when General Greene, with a force exceeding two thousand men, encamped at Hobkirk's Hill, his garrison at Camden was only eight hundred, and reduced to a short allowance of provisions. He did not, however, wait to be attacked, but with officer-

25th. like decision sallied forth, and, after a severe conflict, routed the Americans, killing and wounding five hundred; but his own loss amounted to two hundred and fifty-eight, which, in the relative state of forces, was more than equivalent to that of the enemy. The attack was, however, not less judicious than spirited; for the superiority of the invading army, and their force of artillery, must soon have rendered defence impossible.

Activity of American partizans. The return of an American army to the province of South Carolina gave additional impulse to the spirit of disaffection, which had been assiduously encouraged by the partizans, Sumpter and Marion.

23rd April. Aided by Colonel Lee, whom General Greene detached for that purpose, they reduced Fort Watson, on the river Santee, a task which they accomplished without artillery or intrenching tools, by means of a work constructed of timber, on an unusual plan, which overlooked the fort, and from which riflemen fired with unerring aim on every individual who ventured to appear. By seizing the passes, they retarded, but

7th May. could not prevent, the junction of Colonel Watson with

Lord Rawdon, who thus replaced the numbers he had lost at Hobkirk's Hill.

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Intelligence of this reinforcement being conveyed to General Greene, he shifted his position, to avoid an attack; Lord Rawdon evacuated Camden, after destroying the least portable stores, and retired to Monk's Corner, for the protection of Charlestown, the defences of which were in a feeble state, Lord Cornwallis having, before his departure, demolished some of the old works, and the new not being yet completed. About the same time, Lee and Marion captured Fort Motte on the Congaree, Orangeburgh yielded to Sumpter, and Lee reduced Fort Granby.

Camden evacuated.

10th May.

11th and 15th May. Other forts taken by the enemy.

Satisfied with these successes in the north and north-east parts of South Carolina, Greene directed his views to the western frontier of that province and to Georgia. Godolphin, on the banks of the Savannah, soon surrendered, and Augusta was reduced by a repetition of the expedient employed at Fort Watson.

Their success in Georgia.

5th June.

Meanwhile he laid siege to Ninety-six, where the commander, Colonel Cruger, by the interception of Lord Rawdon's messengers, was kept in ignorance of the recent transactions. The defences of this village were incomplete, and the garrison consisted only of five hundred and fifty provincial troops; but the spirit and ability of the commanding officer frustrated the attacks of the besiegers. Once he destroyed their works by a masterly sally; and interrupted, by similar efforts, the progress of new ones commenced at a greater distance. This hazardous defence was continued, with unremitting exertion, during three weeks, when the garrison were reduced to the greatest extremities for want of water; but their spirits were revived by intelligence, from an intrepid loyalist, that Lord Rawdon was marching to raise the siege. General Greene had more precise information, and, after an ineffectual endeavour to carry the place by storm, retreated across the Saluda with sufficient celerity to evade pursuit.

21st May. Failure at Ninety-six.

Lord Rawdon had, however, no intention to retain possession of Ninety-six; he was only anxious to rescue

Suspension of operations.

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the loyalists from the vengeance of their countrymen, against which he knew that neither sentiments of humanity nor the terms of a capitulation afforded sufficient protection. The division of his force for the escort of these unfortunate persons to Charlestown, encouraged General Greene again to hang on his army, till the heat of the season compelled both parties to seek repose. General Greene, being joined by the detachments under Lee, Sumpter, and Marion, encamped on the high hills of Santee, while Lord Rawdon retired to Orangeburgh, and, shortly afterward, the impaired state of his health rendered it necessary for him to revisit his native land.

Execution of Col. Haynes.

July.

During the late disasters, the disaffection of the Americans, and the treachery of those who, under pretence of loyalty, had joined the British standard, were more than usually apparent. An example to deter others from similar attempts were among the last public acts of Lord Rawdon; Colonel Isaac Haynes, who had taken the oath and served in the British army, being captured fighting in the American cause, was condemned to death, by a court of inquiry at Charlestown, as a traitor. His execution occasioned a threatening proclamation from General Greene, and was the subject of much public discussion in England; but the conduct of Lord Rawdon was deemed completely justifiable*.

4th August.

26th Aug.

Battle at Eutaw Springs.

22nd Aug.

After the departure of Lord Rawdon, the chief command devolved on Colonel Stewart. General Greene had already achieved, by valour, judgment, and perseverance, the chief object of the campaign; recovering the principal part of South Carolina, and confining the English within the three great rivers Santee, Congaree, and Edisto. Being reinforced by a considerable body of militia and other troops, he marched, as soon as the weather would permit, to attack the British army, who fell back from Wateree to Eutaw. Although Colonel Stewart was apprized of Greene's approach by two deserters, he gave no credit

8th Sep.

* See papers on this subject, Remembrancer, vol. xiii. p. 121.

to their intelligence, but sent four hundred unarmed men on that very road to procure vegetables, the greater part of whom were taken prisoners. The few who escaped spread alarm, not unaccompanied with terror. An obstinate and bloody engagement ensued, in which the artillery of both parties was taken and retaken; both claimed the victory, and nearly seven hundred were slain, wounded, and missing on each side. The British, having kept the field that night and the following day, retired to Monk's Corner, and subsequently to Charlestown Neck, while General Greene, too much enfeebled to make an attempt on the city, regained his former encampment on the high hills of Santee; thus terminating the eventful campaign in South Carolina*.

Expedition of the enemy against Portsmouth. 23rd of Jan.

During these transactions, Sir Henry Clinton was prevented, by the reduced state of his force, from undertaking any distant enterprize. Early in the year he felt considerable apprehensions for the safety of New York. The French having attained a superiority of naval power in consequence of the loss of the Culloden man of war in a tempest, while the America was separated from the fleet, and the Bedford dismantled, their admiral, availing himself of this accident, blocked up the port of Portsmouth in Virginia, where Arnold was established. Washington embarked a large body of troops under La Fayette to act in that quarter, and entertained sanguine hopes of surrounding and capturing Arnold; but they were frustrated by the languor and ineptitude of the French General and Admiral; and the dispatch of the reinforcement of two thousand men from New York, under General Phillips, enabled the British to resume offensive operations. After completing the fortification of Portsmouth, General Phillips ravaged the country, and destroyed a large quantity of valuable stores, without loss, and almost without opposition. Having achieved the objects of his march,

26th of March, General Phillips ravages Virginia.

* In the ensuing year, the provincial legislature recompensed the services of General Greene by the donation of an estate of the value of ten thousand guineas. See Remembrancer, vol. xiv. p. 140. And for the general events of the Campaign, Life of General Greene, vol. i. c. 9 and 10. vol. ii. c. 11 and 12.

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and left a garrison in the small fort at Mill Point, Phillips was preparing to rejoin Clinton, according to his original instructions, when he received intelligence

7th of May. of the march of Lord Cornwallis, accompanied with a request that the armies should unite at Petersburgh. Compliance with this demand was the last military

9th. His death. act of General Phillips, who, after a short illness, died of a malignant fever, and the command again devolved on Arnold. The junction of the armies was effected

20th of May. Arrival of Lord Cornwallis. without difficulty, Lord Cornwallis having reached Petersburgh with only slight opposition, at the head of sixteen hundred men, with four pieces of cannon.

In this interval, the Commander-in-Chief, unapprized of Lord Cornwallis's movement, had sent a considerable reinforcement to the army in Virginia, hoping to facilitate the return of all to co-operate in the defence of New York, which he considered in danger of an attack. His further intentions were, if the city should be secure, to move as high as possible up the Chesapeak, and by the effect of an operation which had been preconcerted with General Haldimand, who commanded in Canada, to make an entire division between the united Colonies; and, inclosing the armies, ravage on either side, as circumstances might require. Lord Cornwallis, unacquainted with Clinton's views, expeditiously crossed James river in pursuit of La Fayette, dispatching two bodies of troops, under Tarleton and Simcoe, in different directions, to destroy stores and provisions.

Pursuit of La Fayette. La Fayette rested his only hope on meeting with General Wayne, who was advancing to meet him with a body of troops from Maryland. He retreated with so much celerity that pursuit soon became hopeless; but the two detached expeditions were eminently prosperous.

Success of Colonel Tarleton, Tarleton, with his usual speed and intrepidity, reached Charlotteville, and broke up the session of the general assembly of the province, taking seven of its members, and one member of the general congress, prisoners; Mr. Jefferson, president of the province, narrowly escaped. Tarleton in his progress destroyed several waggons laden with clothing and stores, and,

at Charlotteville, a thousand new firelocks, four hundred barrels of gun-powder, with considerable quantities of tobacco and cloathing.

and Colonel Simcoe.

Colonel Simcoe was equally successful; the enemy, under Baron Stuben, had removed to the opposite side of the river Fluvanna; but, by an ingenious feint, he induced them to abandon their stores, which were destroyed by a small detachment under Captain Stevenson and Cornet Wolsey, who passed the river in canoes.

Despair of the Americans.

The progress of the British army in pursuit of La Fayette was attended with general destruction of stores and property. The distress of the Americans was extreme; their operations retarded by the want of enthusiasm and public confidence; their paper currency so much depreciated that it no longer answered the purposes of its emission; while the recent ravages, in the hitherto favoured province of Virginia, completed the public despair. The incapacity of Congress to proceed in the contest was ascertained by intercepted dispatches; and the prisoners, taken by Tarleton, represented as the prevailing sentiment, that if Great Britain could hinder the intended co-operation of the French fleet and army with the native forces, during the ensuing autumn, the French alliance would be dissolved, and an union with the mother-country cordially embraced both by Congress and the people*. No exertion was necessary on the part of the British armies; a system studiously defensive, preventing all splendid advantages on the side of their opponents, would have reduced them to despair, and frustrated all hopes of ultimate success.

Projects of the enemy against New York.

Both the French and American commanders were sensible of the necessity of effecting some great achievement to reanimate the drooping cause; and when M. de Barras arrived with a squadron of ships, General Washington had interviews with him and the Chevalier Chastelleux, and finally a conference with Rochambeau, at which an attack on New York was proposed,

21st of May.

* Tarleton's Campaigns, p. 297.

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as the only exploit of sufficient importance to claim their exertions, as the march of Lord Cornwallis to Virginia was not yet known*.

June. Clinton requires troops from Virginia.

Sir Henry Clinton being apprised of these intentions, by an express intercepted in the Jerseys, forwarded dispatches to accelerate the return of the detachments from Virginia. He did not, however, insist on their immediately quitting Lord Cornwallis, if he was engaged in a movement which required their assistance; or, if he would employ them in co-operating with the loyalists in the upper part of the Chesapeak, and upon the Susquehanna, which would have made an effectual diversion of General Washington's force.

30th June.

This plan not meeting the approbation of Lord Cornwallis, he resolved to send back the troops, and, according to his understanding of Clinton's dispatches, repassed James River, and retired to Portsmouth.

6th July. The order countermanded.

As the British troops were about to embark, La Fayette, who had joined General Wayne, made an approach to harass their rear; but, instead of gaining the expected advantage, was himself attacked, and

11th July.

night alone saved him from destruction. Before the British troops could put to sea, Sir Henry Clinton wrote two dispatches, expressing disapprobation at the abandonment of the neck of land at Williamsburg, requiring Lord Cornwallis to resume that position, and fortify himself in Old Point Comfort, as the best naval station, which he could protect, with or without the addition of York Town, as he should find most convenient; and he was permitted to retain the troops which he had been required to return.

Lord Cornwallis stationed at York Town.

In pursuance of what he considered to be the spirit of these instructions, Lord Cornwallis surveyed Old Point Comfort, and finding neither that nor Portsmouth a sufficiently defensive station for ships, evacuated them, and fortified the towns of York and Gloucester.

1st to 22nd August.

6th July.

Meanwhile, General Washington, having effected

* For these facts and the substance of the conference, see Sparks's Life of Washington, vol. ii. p. 197.

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a junction with Rochambeau, appeared more than once in force before New York, with the seeming intention of making an attack as soon as the co-operation of De Grasse could be ascertained; but on his arrival, his pilots refusing to steer his ships over the bar of New York, the attack was abandoned, and the united French and American armies, after several feints, marched across the Jerseys to Philadelphia.

The enemy menace New York. 21st and 23rd. 18th August. Arrival of De Grasse.

Although the intention of De Grasse to visit America was well known, it was not conceived that he would employ his whole armament in that expedition, and neglect the convoy of the homeward-bound trade. Sir Samuel Hood, therefore, followed him with only fourteen sail of the line, and, on his arrival, Admiral Graves (who, as senior, took command of the squadron) possessed only nineteen sail of the line, to oppose twenty-eight. De Grasse, having received proper information from La Fayette, forwarded to the main army the land force he had conveyed from the West Indies, and blocked up York River, with four ships of the line and several frigates, while the remainder of the fleet was anchored in Lynhaven Bay, within the Capes of Virginia.

30th August. Arrival of Sir Samuel Hood.

In this position they were discovered by Admiral Graves; a partial action ensued, in which considerable damage was done to both fleets; no ship was taken; but the Terrible, a British man-of-war, was rendered incapable of future service and burnt. The fleets continued in sight of each other several days; but no advantage of numbers or wind could encourage the French to make an attack; and the Admiral, at length, returned to the Chesapeak, where De Barras had arrived with his squadron, and fourteen transports laden with heavy artillery and military stores. The British Admiral, finding the position unassailable, retired to New York to refit.

5th September. Partial action between the fleets.

10th.

Soon after the arrival of Lord Cornwallis in Virginia, General Arnold returned to Sir Henry Clinton, who now employed him in an attack on New London, in Connecticut. Although deceived in his information respecting the fortifications, Arnold took the town,

Arnold's expedition to New London.

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and a fort, called Griswold, by assault; destroyed fifty pieces of cannon, and a large quantity of military stores, and burned twelve ships, the flames of which spreading to the town, great part was consumed.

York town invested.

The allied armies, intent on the project of besieging Lord Cornwallis, made their arrangements at a

14th Sept.

Council of War, held on board the Ville de Paris, the flag-ship of Count de Grasse, the forces were landed

25th.

in the neighbourhood of Williamsburgh, and, being joined by those under La Fayette and M. De St. Simon, encamped before York Town.

28th.

Lord Cornwallis did not impede the approaches of the enemy, although La Fayette, with only two thousand men, was within a short distance of him, and unsupported; but appears to have relied with sanguine confidence on relief from New York, which Sir Henry Clinton expressed hopes might arrive by the 5th of October. In expectation of this succour, Lord Cornwallis, to the astonishment of General Washington, withdrew his army within the works of the town, which were immediately occupied by the enemy, and the post at Gloucester blockaded*.

6th and 9th October.

The time, however, elapsed, and no succours arrived; the enemy rapidly advanced their works and completed their batteries, maintaining an incessant cannonade, which damaged the unfinished fortifications of the town, silenced the artillery, and occasioned considerable slaughter. The garrison were indefatigable in opening new embrasures, and particularly annoyed the invaders from two redoubts, advanced three hundred

14th October. Two redoubts stormed.

yards in front of the works. These were stormed by parties of French and Americans, separately employed on the service to excite emulation, and afterward, by indefatigable industry, joined to the works of the besiegers. The defences of the town were at length completely ruined, and although vigorous and successful sorties, conducted by Lieutenant-Colonels Abercrombie and Lake, retarded the approach of the enemy,

15th.

16th.

Lord Cornwallis was convinced that his position was

* See Washington's Letters to Congress on that subject, dated October 1.

no longer tenable. In a dispatch to Clinton, he depicted, in forcible terms, the peril of his situation: "We dare not," he said, "shew a gun to their old "batteries, and I expect their new ones will be open "to-morrow morning. Experience has shewn that "our fresh earthen works do not resist their powerful "artillery, so that we shall soon be exposed to an "assault in ruined works, in a bad position, and with "weakened numbers. The safety of the place is, "therefore, so very precarious, that I cannot recommend that the fleet and army should run any great "risk in endeavouring to save us." He attempted to escape, by transporting his army across the river in the night; but, after he had landed a part on the opposite shore, a storm prevented the return of the boats, and the few troops who had been ferried over, with difficulty rejoined the garrison.

Lord Cornwallis attempts a retreat.

In this extremity, Lord Cornwallis surrendered his whole army prisoners of war to General Washington, as commander of the combined force, and the vessels in the harbour to De Grasse; the troops as prisoners to the United States, the seamen to the French King. The garrison obtained the same honours of war as had been granted by Sir Henry Clinton at Charlestown; private property was retained, and the officers were allowed their freedom on parole. The tenth article of the capitulation* was most exposed to censure, as it yielded up the loyalists, without protection, to the mercy of those who had already persecuted them with such unrelenting savageness; but, in extenuation, it was alleged that the British Commander secured the safety of these persons under another form, by obtaining permission for the Bonetta sloop of war to sail for New York, unsearched, with as many soldiers on board as he should think fit, provided they were accounted for in any future exchange. This article was devised, and used as the means of conniving at

19th. Capitulates.

* It was in these words: "Natives or inhabitants of different parts of this "country, at present in York or Gloucester, are not to be punished on account of "having joined the British army." Answer; "This article cannot be assented "to, being altogether of civil resort."

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the safe conduct of the loyalists*. The garrison, at the time of the surrender, amounted to five thousand nine hundred and fifty men; but only four thousand and seventeen were fit for duty, while the besiegers were nineteen thousand. The conquerors acquired a large train of artillery, with a considerable quantity of arms, ammunition, and stores, a frigate, two ships of twenty guns, and a great number of transports and other vessels.

Efforts of Clinton.

During the progress of this disastrous event, Sir Henry Clinton had used every exertion to assist Lord Cornwallis. He was deceived, even at the moment of Sir Samuel Hood's arrival, in his information on the comparative force of the fleets; nor could he believe the French admiral had left the West Indies without detaching any part of his force for protection of the trade, or that Sir George Rodney would, unless assured of a superiority, have proceeded with three ships of the line for Europe, and left others in the West Indies, contrary to his positive orders from Government to watch and controul the operations of De Grasse. Sir Samuel Hood contributed to Sir Henry Clinton's error, by a positive statement that he possessed a force superior to that of the enemy; an assurance which was not known to be unfounded till after the engagement between Graves and De Grasse on the fifth of September. Sir Henry justly considered an attack on Lord Cornwallis at York Town impossible, unless the British fleet was overmatched in the Chesapeak; he knew that the original intention of the combined forces was to attack New York, and, therefore, considered their first efforts against York Town as a feint.

27th August.

Yet he imparted the intelligence he received to Lord Cornwallis, countermanded his first order for returning the detachments, and sent all the recruits and convalescents he could spare from the defence of New

* The plea of necessity, and the security afforded by using the Bonetta sloop as an asylum, did not tranquillize the feelings or calm the apprehensions of the loyalists throughout America. The word *punished*, in the 10th article, was construed as an admission of guilt, and of consequent right in the victors to prosecute them for acts of allegiance to their lawful sovereign.

York, Long Island, and Staten Island, which required nine thousand men, for the augmentation of his Lordship's force. When the intention to attack York Town became certain, Clinton prepared to dispatch a reinforcement of seven thousand men; but the condition of the fleet delayed their sailing till the nineteenth of October, the day on which the British army surrendered. On his arrival off the Chesapeak, Sir Henry Clinton received information that Lord Cornwallis had capitulated, which rendered unnecessary the plans he had preconcerted with the Admiral for forcing the enemy at anchor, and taking up a position within them in James River. The practicability of this attempt was ascertained by Captain Elphinstone in the Experiment, who had reconnoitred the enemy's position, and made the signal accordingly. Had Lord Cornwallis not surrendered, it was Sir Henry Clinton's intention to land his forces on that river, and move toward the enemy, Lord Cornwallis making a sally to favour their joint operations. The terms in which Lord Cornwallis announced and accounted for his capture, occasioned a series of discussions. On his arrival at New York, his Lordship complained that his service was slighted in some instances, and in others not adequately supported by the Commander-in-Chief. His plan for reducing Virginia had been approved, he said, by the ministry, and was favoured by the King, but discouraged by Clinton; and, in his public dispatch on the surrender of York Town, he accused Sir Henry Clinton of withholding a reinforcement which he had positively promised by the fifth of October.

In answer to these allegations, Sir Henry Clinton alleged that the plan for invading Virginia, the most warlike of all the provinces, was injudicious as to time and circumstances, improperly forced on administration by an inferior, without the privity of his superior officer, and undertaken in a rash and unadvised manner*. His positive orders were to consider the pre-

* It is presumed, however, his lordship's error arose from the circumstance of expecting to succeed to the command, as Sir Henry Clinton, after the capture of Charlestown, had requested leave to resign to him, which his lordship expect-

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servation of South Carolina and safety of Charlestown paramount to all other objects; both which were endangered, and even lost to view, by the chase of Greene across North Carolina, and the subsequent incursion into Virginia. In that province, Sir Henry Clinton had never projected any solid operation, convinced that the predatory and destructive excursions he had directed, added to the general distress, would have terminated the American war, if the British army could be preserved from any serious disaster. Washington's troops had no object but New York to which their attacks could be directed, had not Lord Cornwallis presented himself to their aim; and many errors were alleged against his mode of defence. He was blamed for posting himself injudiciously at York and Gloucester; for not attacking the enemy in detail as they were forming the siege, when the corps under the command of La Fayette at Williamsburgh did not consist of more than two thousand men, and might with ease have been dislodged or captured before the junction of the other troops; and for neglecting easy and certain means of escape from the overwhelming force which ultimately engulphed him. The relief by means of the fleet was only promised if the ships could be enabled to sail by the fifth of October; and the promise was accompanied with an instruction to Lord Cornwallis to use every exertion for saving at least part of the army, should he have reason to apprehend that reinforcements could not arrive sufficiently early.

These complaints and assertions on either side have occasioned a difference of opinion on this event, which was magnified by the Americans and their friends far beyond its real importance: Congress celebrated it with rejoicings and thanksgivings, their drooping cause appeared to revive, and all past reverses to be forgotten. Subsequent resolutions in Great Britain

ing would take place, transmitted his own plans to ministers (as being the most expeditious mode), without consulting with Sir Henry Clinton, whose resignation was not accepted. See letter from Lord George Germaine, dated July 7, 1781, in Sir Henry Clinton's Narrative, page 36.

justified these exhibitions of ardent joy; but the capture of Lord Cornwallis's army of four thousand men fit for duty, though felt with anguish and dejection by all loyal subjects, might easily have been repaired, had the spirit of the nation warranted an adequate exertion of its resources*.

* In these transactions I have consulted, beside the histories and Gazettes, the pamphlets published by Lord Cornwallis and Sir Henry Clinton, and Tarleton's Campaigns; the Biographical Works of Sparks and Johnson; and have been assisted by private information and correspondence, and the dispatches in the State Paper Office.

CHAPTER THE FORTY-THIRD.

1781—1782.

Conduct of neutral powers—of the Empress of Russia.—Prussia admitted to the armed confederacy.—Unsuccessful attempts at mediation—and for a separate treaty with Holland.—Altered conduct of the Emperor—he joins the armed confederacy—his increasing partiality toward France.—State of the public mind in England—of the Cabinet.—Lord North.—The King's firmness—augmented strength of opposition.—Mr. Pitt.—Meeting of Parliament.—Debates on the addresses—on the capture of St. Eustatia.—Motion against the war by Sir James Lowther.—Debates on the treatment of Mr. Laurens—he is discharged.—Recess.

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1781. Conduct of neutral powers.

DURING these events, ministers were in a continual state of alarm and solicitude: distresses were augmenting, while hope and consolation almost vanished from their view. None of the continental powers shewed a disposition to make effectual exertions for the benefit of Great Britain; and, while the efforts of hostility were open, earnest, and unremitting, those of friendship, if indeed a jealous neutrality could deserve that name, were languid, cold, and feeble.

Conduct of the Empress.

In considering the conduct of Russia at this period, less light will be derived from the general principles on which the acts and politics of governments ought to be regulated, than from the particular character of the Sovereign, and those by whom she was influenced. Catherine was no longer young; her faculties were growing weaker, and her passions stronger; she no longer possessed the vigour of mind and acuteness of understanding which characterized her earlier days; and there was a consequent irregularity in her mea-

sures. The new confederacy was viewed as establishing a most heterogeneous union, tending to prolong the war, and ultimately to embroil the contracting parties; nor had it, as yet, materially benefited or injured any of the belligerent powers, or advanced the interests of those who formed it. The service on which they were ordered disgusted the naval forces; a general discontent prevailed in the fleet; the Admirals with difficulty could keep their crews together, or prevent their officers from asking their dismission. Nor was her armament in itself formidable. The ships were fully manned, but not with seafaring people; January 5th. they were well rigged, but old and rotten. By a convention which was entered into, the Dutch were to furnish a contingent of fifteen ships of the line, and Denmark and Sweden ten; the Danes very rationally declared that Holland, being already at war, could not with propriety be party to a neutral convention; the observation gave offence at Petersburgh, but effected no alteration in the arrangement. Determined to July. gain the benefits of the alliance, Catherine was desirous of loading four Russian frigates with hemp and iron, to be carried under a merchant flag to Spain. She observed to Sir James Harris that she wanted Spanish wool, and presumed that our government would not oppose sending the productions of her own country to obtain it, nor consider her conduct as derogating from the good-will she felt towards us. A firm and temperate answer from the British ambassador rendered the impropriety of this proposition evident, which was not persisted in. The scheme was disapproved even by the Empress's subjects; the sailors evinced much dissatisfaction, and no officer was found desirous to command the frigates. Always desirous of sustaining the principle of free-trade, the Empress seems to have become sensible that the armed league was not the proper means to give it effect, and to have viewed it in its immediate operation almost with indifference; but pride would not permit her to renounce a plan, in favour of which she had pronounced so publicly such decided opinions, and for the consummation of which

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she had made such strong exertions. Had Potemkin entirely guided her councils, it is not improbable that she might have acted differently; but, although he retained in private his full influence and ascendancy, he had resigned the direction of foreign affairs to Panin, who used all his powers, sparing no means, however incorrect and dishonourable, to serve the cause and forward the views of the King of Prussia and of France. He had arranged the Empress's declaration, and contrived to procure the publication of it, being fully persuaded that she might have different intentions, and had so framed it as to be highly prejudicial to Great Britain. De Vergennes boasted of it as a master-piece of his policy*.

Prussia admitted to the armed confederacy.

Still animated by his wonted aversion, the King of Prussia used every intrigue and petty artifice to injure the interests of England. By a public letter to his minister of finances, he ordered all Prussian subjects to withdraw their money from the British funds, as a general bankruptcy was inevitable. He endeavoured to persuade the Empress of Russia that the accession of the Dutch to the armed neutrality accasioned their war with England, and that the commencement of hostilities was the *casus fœderis* of the league; but, although the Empress was not deluded by this insinuation, the King of Prussia, aided by Panin, was at length admitted as a contracting party. The French rejoiced much in this event, trusting that Frederick would soon obtain ascendancy, and influence as much as he could the acts of the other powers. He answered their expectations, by permitting gross abuses to be practised under the sanction of his flag, while, in his public acts, he strenuously inveighed against them.

January.

Efforts at mediation.

In the interval, attempts were renewed to terminate hostilities by mediation; the Empress proposed

* From the Correspondence of Lord Stormont and Sir James Harris, in 1780 and 1781, in the State Paper Office. In one of his letters (March 1781) the English ambassador relates that Panin had written feigned letters in the name of Prince Cobenzl, and himself (Sir James), pretending that they had been intercepted at the post office, decyphered, and then returned and forwarded; by this contrivance, no one could dispute or disprove his supposed copies. Nor was this the only effort of the kind. In June, 1780, a false and fabricated account of observations by Lord Stormont on the neutral league, was published in the Leyden Gazette.

herself as the conciliating power, and she was accepted, with the addition of the Emperor, the omission of whom, in the first proposal, had given some umbrage. The originating of this project is one of the instances of the variable mind of Catherine. Notwithstanding all the efforts of our enemies, her regard for this country could not be entirely eradicated; and Potemkin, first indirectly, but afterward without ambiguity, proposed that, for a proper compensation, she should declare herself our ally. Minorca was fixed upon, and would have been granted, but new difficulties presented themselves. She complained to Sir James Harris, that, while she retained in its full force her regard for England, she was restrained from assisting us by a notion that we did not treat her with due attention; if she had from us a strong and convincing assurance of confidence and friendship, she would repay it by affording us, in the end, most effectual aid. Without requiring so much, Great Britain offered to cede the desired possession, if the Empress could influence France and Spain to make a peace on the basis of the treaty of Paris; the French to evacuate all British America, and no stipulations to be made for His Majesty's rebellious subjects, who could never be suffered to treat through the medium of any foreign power. The answer and conduct of France and Spain presented no hopes of accomplishing a treaty. Both professed their willingness to accept a mediation through which peace might be attained on just and equitable terms; but both rejected, as derogatory to their honour, the preliminary that there should be no intervention with respect to America. France said she had been forced into the war, and would not relinquish it unless the independence of America were positively stipulated; and Spain, with an equal disregard of truth, asserted that she was still engaged in a direct negotiation with England. Apprehensive if the justice, if not of the partiality of the Empress toward Great Britain, the ambassadors of France, Holland, and Prussia, and they were aided by Panin, used their utmost efforts to give a new bias to her mind. They

1780. November. Dec. 4th.

24th.

1781. Jan. 19th

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urged that we were not sincere in our wishes for peace; that we accepted her offer of intervention merely to divert her mind from the commercial connexion she was forming in the North, and that by giving her a colleague, we not only took from her half the glory, but shewed our diffidence both of her disposition and ability to terminate the war. The fit course for her to pursue, they argued, was to complete her plan of armed neutrality, by combining in it both the Emperor and the King of Prussia, and then to command peace on her own terms. France and Holland appealed to her interest by offers of great commercial advantages; and, when she declared herself averse to the independence of America, Spain insinuated that the declarations of France on that point did not meet with her full approbation; she entered into the war on account of her own grievances, not to support the system pursued by France; and, as a proof that she never had objected to a separate peace, cited the negotiation with Mr. Cumberland. Thus artfully assailed on every side, her pride, her interest, and her justice, all essayed by turns, the Empress regarded the cause of England with diminished favour; she considered the offer of Minorca too great to be made without some latent object; it must be a contrivance to draw her into a war, and she expressed her rejection of the proposal in the terms of a French comic writer*.

Another, less direct, attempt to establish a negotiation freed from the difficulties which had hitherto impeded it, was made by Count Belgioioso, and M. de Simolin, who delivered to Lord Stormont an *insinuation verbale*, proposing a Congress at Vienna for adjusting a general peace, without the intervention of any of the belligerents, or even of the Imperial Courts, unless upon express solicitation, and in which case, the Americans were to be left to treat for themselves. The answer of France was, that she could neither treat for peace without or in behalf of her transatlantic allies, who must have plenipotentiaries of

* La mariée est trop belle; on veut me tromper.

their own at a Congress. Spain declared that she could not agree, unless the question of the cession of Gibraltar for an equivalent consideration were first decided; while Great Britain, firmly retaining her original pretensions, refused to treat, except on matters purely relating to France and Spain exclusive of all discussions relative to Gibraltar, and that no mention could be made of reconciliation with the colonies, until they should have returned to their obedience.

Mediation ineffectual.

At length, after the interchange of numerous papers, Prince Kaunitz, who had been principally engaged in managing the conferences, declared that the answers of France and Spain, precluded all hopes of a favourable terminaton: the principles they strove to maintain, convinced him that all attempts at conciliation would be ill-timed. Spain, he said, manifested more passion and inflexibility than France; the Catholic King expressing particular acrimony, and affecting peculiar causes of complaint.

September.

April. Negotiation for a separate treaty with Holland.

When the hope of a general pacification was nearly extinguished, the Empress endeavoured to make a distinct treaty for Holland. Her efforts were at first unsuccessful, because Great Britain refused to enter into separate arrangements while a general negotiation was pending. The Empress, although displeased at this determination, renewed her endeavours when the impossibility of a general concord became more certain. To the Republic such a treaty would have been of the highest importance; for already, in her commerce, her colonies, and her domestic prosperity, she felt the calamities of the war she had provoked; and she had reason to dread that the Emperor, no longer restrained by the principles of honour and the obligation of treaties, might yield to the expressed desire of his Flemish subjects, and increase their prosperity by opening the navigation of the Scheldt. With his accustomed malice, Panin pronounced the improbability of any arrangement; England, he said, was a proud nation, which affronted all the world*. Far from warranting

July.

* Une nation fière, qui brusque tout le monde.

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these sentiments, the King had declared, that if a general pacification proceeded, the terms with the Dutch would not be difficult, as he would ever be ready to consider them as friends and allies whenever they should sincerely determine to be so, and would give satisfaction for the past and security for the future; and it was declared that the captures which had taken place should make no alteration in a treaty for peace. The benevolence of the King and the intervention of the Empress were, however, rendered ineffectual by the prevalence of the French party, and all their attempts failed.

Altered conduct of Austria.

For some time past the behaviour of Prince Kaunitz had shewn that he was not to be considered as a friend to England. His first observations on the negotiation for a treaty were ambiguous; he admitted the arguments of England to be fair and honourable, but too lofty for the force of the nation. When the determination not to permit the introduction of American affairs was disclosed, he sarcastically said, "whoever "succeeds in making a peace for you on these terms, "*Erit mihi magnus Apollo.*" The Bourbons would fight us for many years, rather than accede to such terms, or give up the Americans. He expressed his sentiments more fully when he announced the failure of the negotiation. "If you have not strength enough," he said, "to support your rights, you must yield to "superior force and dire necessity. I own, when I "hear it alleged that the honour of France must "not be sacrificed by abandoning the Americans, "I answer as an Englishman would, what have I to do "with the honour of France? she herself sacrificed it "at the moment when she contracted a traitorous "and unwarrantable connexion with the King's rebel-"lious subjects. We can afford her no other choice "than that of the most proper and becoming manner "of receding from that connexion. But these senti-"ments will be unavailing, even in the mouth of an "English minister, unless you can maintain them by "force in every quarter. Your present difficulties and "dangers seem to require important concessions; but

"I shall applaud the national spirit and vigour, if they "render them unnecessary."

This opinion of a foreign minister respecting the transactions of Great Britain, merit notice only as they indicate the altered temper of the Austrian cabinet. At the decease of the Empress Maria Theresa, in November, 1780, great expectations were formed from the vigour and spirit of Joseph II. But Kaunitz infused into his mind a partiality for France, to which he had previously shewn a decided repugnance. Great Britain endeavoured to gain the friendship of the Emperor by liberal offers, and, among others, to open the navigation of the Scheldt; and it was strongly urged, that a connexion with England could alone bring back that political system which would give to Austria due weight in the general scale of Europe. Prince Kaunitz, however, confined the first transactions of the new reign to that restricted policy which he had marked out for the Empress-Queen; Joseph lost an important period in petty internal regulations, and was soon characterized by an ardent attachment to trifling arrangements, a jealousy of Prussia, and a subserviency to France. Kaunitz possessed talents and virtues; but he had formed an erroneous system, and was of a disposition too unbending to recede.

The Emperor joins the armed confederacy.

The partiality of the Emperor for France soon became apparent, from the reserve of Prince Kaunitz toward the English ambassador, and his vindication of the enemy, if not always on the ground of right, at least on that of expediency. He began also to display a predilection for the northern league, and, after a long and affectedly mysterious concealment, avowed the accession of his sovereign to that injurious compact, declaring, at the same time, that he entered into it with Russia alone, unembarrassed by Sweden, Denmark, or Prussia*.

* In the formation of this arrangement, occurred a curious specimen of etiquette. The two imperial courts had long disputed on the subject of precedence in signature; the Emperor of Germany, insisting that it was his right to place himself first in both parts of the treaty, while, on the part of Russia, it was demanded that each contracting party should be first named in the document delivered as his. To avoid a discussion on the present occasion, the Emperor

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A journey which the Emperor made to Paris, in the course of the year, seemed totally to have reversed the sentiments he had imbibed in his former expedition; his partiality was now as conspicuous as his contempt had been outrageous. His admiration of Louis XVI, and satisfaction at events favourable to France, excited surprise at Vienna, and consternation in the British cabinet*.

His growing partiality toward France.

State of the public mind.

The perplexities arising from the aspect of foreign affairs were augmented by untoward appearances at home. Although Great Britain had never before made such extensive military efforts; although no other country had ever conceived the idea of sending and provisioning so great an army across the Atlantic, the war, marked by ill success, had ceased to be popular; national honour, or the jealous vindication of the rights of sovereignty, were no longer considered equivalent to the enormous expenses, which the arts of opposition had taught the people to regard with peculiar suspicion and malevolence. The authority of Great Britain over the colonies had been so often explained, qualified, and partially renounced, that its value was rendered almost insignificant, and the pompous accounts of beneficial commerce with America were generally discredited, since a long protracted suspension of intercourse had produced no alarming effects; but, on the contrary, the strength and resources of the country surpassed expectation, and exposed to ridicule the gloomy forebodings of theoretical financiers. The grant of American independence was therefore contemplated as a moderate medium for the acquisition of peace; nor was the necessity of yielding to a formidable combination considered derogatory to the national honour, which had been so gloriously maintained during the struggle. Had it been thought expedient to aim at exciting strenuous sentiments of enthusiasm, the state of the public mind was peculiarly unfavourable. The

signed a declaration of his desire to become a party to the armed league, and the Empress an answer, expressing her readiness to admit him.

* Chiefly from private information and official correspondence, particularly that of Lord Stormont with Sir James Harris, and Sir Robert Murray Keith, Ambassadors at Petersburgh and Vienna, in 1780 and 1781; in the State Paper Office.

dejection which proceeded from ill success and the apprehension of undefined calamity, rendered the advocates of government timid and languid; but it was obvious that, with a return of good fortune, their spirits would have revived and their efforts would have been re-animated. Long declamations and verbose complaints of speculative grievances, or unfelt oppressions, had rendered political discussions odious, and public spirit suspected. The people of the metropolis, immersed in luxury, and abandoned to dissipation*, surveyed with apathy the course of public events; while those in the country received as incontrovertible dogmas the rash speculations of their mock representatives, their delegates, and corresponding committees, who aimed at general reform, and, for the purpose of overthrowing the ministry, did not hesitate to shake the very basis of government.

State of the Cabinet.

In the Cabinet there was not that perfect unanimity and cordial co-operation which alone can give permanent effect to prosperous events, or afford means of repairing disasters. Whatever might have been the opinions entertained by some individuals in office at the beginning of the contest with America, its progress had shaken the firmness or abated the confidence of several who had shewn themselves, at first, the defenders of extreme principles and the advisers of vigorous measures. Lord North had long felt that his

Lord North.

* The state of the British metropolis occasioned, at this period, severe animadversions against the police. Within sight of the palace, and in the centre of polite residence, an impudent empiric, under pretext of a medical lecture, detailed every night the most detestable obscenities, which were collected by the underlings of literature, and sent forth to poison the minds of the rising generation, nauseously illustrated with disgusting prostitutions of the graphic art. A destructive mode of adventure, called "E. O." was supposed out of the reach of the law, because not distinctly specified in any statute; and tables were held in almost every street and alley in the metropolis. To these not only men of fortune, but the tradesman, the mechanic, nay, even the apprentice and the menial, resorted. Some were established in common brothels, and exhibited disgraceful scenes of riot, drunkenness and debauchery, while plunder, assassination, and suicide abounded. Late in the ensuing session, the attention of the Legislature was directed toward these nuisances, and it was stated in the House of Commons (see Debates, 26th June, 1782), that, in two parishes of Westminster alone, two hundred and ninety-six E. O. tables were maintained. Another member corroborated the assertion, adding, that five hundred more were on the stocks, and that they were now to be found in almost every country town.

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station was too perilous and its duties too onerous for his strength, and, on several occasions, had offered either to retire altogether, or to act in a less prominent situation than that which he occupied; but the King always combated such inclinations, and urged him, by all considerations of honour, duty, and personal friendship, not to desert him in the moment of danger, or expose him to insult from those who would consider the acquisition of office a matter of personal triumph.

The King's firmness.

So great was his Majesty's repugnance to the parties who were then conspicuous in opposition, that, in March, 1778, he declared, in a confidential letter to his Prime Minister, that "he would run any personal "risk rather than submit to them. He would rather "hazard his crown than do what was disgraceful. If "the nation would not stand by him, they should have "another king; for he never would put his hand to "what would make him miserable to the last hour of "his life. To give Lord North ease, he would accept "the services of those men in his ministry; but, rather "than be shackled by those desperate men, he would "lose his crown, and not wear it as a disgrace."

His sentiments throughout the war.

With respect to America, the views and feelings of the King had always been direct and uniform. In the earliest proceedings of the insurgents, in 1774, he discerned forcible resistance, rebellion, and a determination to reject the dominion of the mother country. In opposing this attempt, he acted in conformity with the judgment of all his subjects, who were convinced, however erroneously, of the vital importance of the American colonies, and of the extinction of British power, should their independence ever be conceded. On this point, in noticing some suggestion of peace, in January 1778, he said, "Nothing short of inde-"pendency will be accepted. I do not think there is "a man bold or mad enough to treat for the mother-"country on such a basis." In another letter he renewed the advice he had strongly given to Lord North, not to bind himself to bring forward any plan for restoring tranquillity, "not from any absurd ideas of

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" unconditional submission, which my mind never " harboured, but from foreseeing that whatever can be " proposed will be liable, not to bring America back " to her attachment, but to dissatisfy this country, which " so cheerfully and handsomely carries on the contest, " and has a right to have the struggle continued till " convinced that it is vain." In June 1779, when both France and Spain had declared war, his perseverance was unabated. " No man in my dominions," he said, " desires solid peace more than I do; but no inclina- " tion to get out of the present difficulties, which cer- " tainly keep my mind very far from a state of ease, " can incline me to enter into the destruction of the " empire." On the objections to the expense, and the intimation that the advantages to be gained by the contest will never repay it, he observed that, " if, in " any war, be it ever so successful, persons will sit " down and weigh the expense, they will find, as in " the last, that it has impoverished the state enriched; " but this is only weighing such events in the scale of " a tradesman behind his counter. It is necessary for " those whom Providence has placed in my station to " weigh whether expenses, though very great, are not " sometimes necessary to prevent what would be more " ruinous than any loss of money. The present con- " test with America I cannot help seeing as the most " serious in which this country was ever engaged. It " contains such a train of consequences as must be " examined to feel its real weight. That the impos- " ing a tax was deserving all the evils that have arisen " from it, I suppose no man could allege without being " thought more fit for Bedlam than a seat in the senate; " but step by step the demands of America have risen. " Independence is their object, which every man, not " willing to sacrifice every object to a momentary and " inglorious peace, must concur with me in thinking " this country can never submit to. Should America " succeed in that, the West Indies must follow, not in " independence, but dependence on America. Ireland " would soon follow, and this island reduce itself to a

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" poor island indeed." In these sentiments his Majesty had always persevered; he would listen to no proposal for receiving men into office who would not engage that every means should be employed to keep the empire entire, to prosecute the present just and unprovoked war in all its branches with the utmost vigour, and that past measures should be treated with proper respect. " I can never suppose," he said, in March 1780, " this country so far lost to all ideas of self-im- " portance as to be willing to grant American indepen- " dence. If that could be ever universally adopted, " I shall despair of this country being preserved from " a state of inferiority. I hope never to live to see " that day; for, however I am treated, I must love " this country."

In these dignified sentiments he had always persevered; unmoved by factious clamours, unaffected by the events of the war, and to the end of 1781, he disclaimed any change in his sentiments as to obtaining a peace at the expense of a separation from America, which no difficulties could induce him to consent to. In conformity with this mode of thinking, he declared, at the same period, in an answer to a paper from the two imperial courts, that his resolution never to admit the intervention of any foreign power between himself and his rebel subjects was not susceptible of any modification. It was founded on his duty to his people and to himself, and was no less immutable than the principles on which it stood*.

* The last fact is derived from a document in the State Paper Office, intitled " Reponse à la replique des deux cours imperiales;" the others from Appendix to Jared Sparks's Life of Washington, vol. i. p. 458, purporting to be " Extracts from the Letters of George the Third to Lord North, selected by Lord " Holland from the manuscripts of Sir James Mackintosh," beginning 11th of September in 1774, and ending in 1783. Mr. Sparks gives the following account of these papers. " After the death of Lord North, several letters and notes " from the King to him, while minister, were found among his papers. These fell " into the custody of his son-in-law, (Sylvester) Douglas, Lord Glenbervie, as exe- " cutor, either under his will or that of his son, George Lord Guildford. They were " lent by Lord Glenbervie to Sir James Mackintosh, who made copious and judi- " cious extracts from them, embracing various topics relative to the intercourse " between the King and the minister. These extracts, which in all probability " will ere long see the light, have been perused by many persons, and among them " by Lord Holland, who made such selections from them as bear immediately on " the point in question, and was so obliging as to communicate them to the editor

In Parliament, the minority had gained a considerable increase of adherents, and added to their list several orators, beside the valuable aid of Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Pitt.

Mr. Pitt.

The effect of Mr. Pitt's first appearance in the House has already been mentioned: it was generally anticipated that he was destined to take a distinguished share in the deliberations and government of the country, although his early ascendancy could not so well be foreseen. He was the second son of his father, his favourite, or, as his Lordship termed him, "the hope and comfort of his life*." In his very early years, even in his childhood, he had given proofs of wonderful abilities, of great aptitude for study, and of a disposition to make the best use of his powerful talents. A feeble state of health in his boyish days did not prevent his eager application to study, which was forwarded by learned and judicious tutors. Being destined for the legal profession, he was entered of Pembroke Hall in the University of Cambridge before he had completed his fourteenth year, and pursued a course of education which was certain to conduce to future eminence. His classical knowledge was of great extent, his memory sudden and retentive; im-

"of this work. The paper below is printed accurately from that communication. "It will be seen that, with one or two exceptions, the quotations are from the King's "own letters or notes, without the corresponding communications from Lord "North which either answered or gave occasion to them. The nature of Lord "North's advice or representations, therefore, is only to be inferred from his royal "correspondent's comments and replies; but the meaning is so obvious, and so "often repeated, as not to admit of doubt."

This statement is sufficient to shew the imperfection of the extract as an historical document; for it is impossible to judge rightly of the value of an answer, without knowing the scope of the question or proposition to which it applies. The extract is made, and observations occur in the course of it, proving that the intent was to cast reproach on the character of the King. By those who judge fairly and impartially, who refer the letters to the state of affairs at the times when they are dated, an opposite opinion will be formed; but the full effect will be produced or confirmed in those who either judge entirely from subsequent events, or who, swayed by notions previously formed, conclude that, from the moment any portion of his subjects renounced his rule, the King ought to have abdicated his authority; or that, from the time when envious states perfidiously espoused the adverse cause, he ought to have contemned the voice of his people, subscribed his own degradation, and thrown away that which all parties, however erroneously, considered as the brightest jewel in his diadem, and the most valuable inheritance of his successors.

* Chatham Correspondence, vol. iv. p. 440.

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bued with a genuine veneration for his father, and determined to follow, as nearly as he could, in his steps, he devoted himself to the practice of eloquence in the best manner. From his childhood, he had been encouraged by his father to join in conversation, and to express his opinions on all subjects without reserve; so that he acquired confidence, facility, and precision; and he gave himself the last perfection in oratory, by learning long passages from the ancient poets and historians, and delivering them again in his native tongue, preserving the beauties of their thoughts and the graces of their diction, without submitting to the encumbrance of mere literal translation. In his honest enthusiasm, he rejoiced that, as he had an elder brother, and could not succeed to a title, he might, like his father, be free to pursue the road to fame and utility, as a member of the House of Commons. A consciousness of his limited fortune, an honourable pride, and the determination not to impede his own progress by indiscretions, kept him free from expensive pleasures and irregular pursuits. With a high reputation, he quitted Cambridge, was called to the Bar by the Society of Lincoln's Inn; and, on the western circuit, soon displayed knowledge and talents which left no doubt of his future eminence in the profession of the law, if a more exalted station had not awaited him. On the dissolution of Parliament, in 1780, he aimed, without success, at the representation of his University, but obtained a seat for Appleby, in Westmoreland, on the nomination of Sir James Lowther, procured through the influence of the Duke of Rutland. What he became, and what course he pursued, will be the business of much detail in future pages*.

On the meeting of Parliament, the King, in his speech from the throne, repeated his resolution to persevere in opposing the combined power of his enemies, till he could obtain terms of pacification consistent with his own honour and the permanent interests and se-

* Tomline's Life of Pitt, vol. i. p. 1 to 21, 4to. Chatham Correspondence, vols. ii. iii. iv. passim.

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curity of his people. The restless ambition which first excited the enemy to commence, still prolonged the war; but he could not consent to sacrifice, either to his own desire of peace, or the temporary ease and relief of his subjects, the essential rights and permanent interests of the nation. He mentioned, in terms of deep concern, the unfortunate events of the campaign in Virginia; but trusted in the protection of Providence, the goodness of his cause, the concurrence and support of Parliament, the valour of his forces, and a vigorous, animated, and united exertion of the faculties and resources of his people, for the restoration of a safe and honourable peace to all his dominions.

Debates on the addresses.

Lord Shelburne, who moved an amendment to the address, declared he was not surprised at the language uttered from the throne; it proceeded from a valiant and generous prince, gathering firmness from misfortune, and assuming an air of dignity and resolution in the moment when calamity pressed on him and his people. Nor was he surprised that ministers, taking advantage of such noble sentiments, had fabricated a speech flattering to the personal feelings of their sovereign; but the situation of the country required them to resist the impulse of their master's sentiments, and honestly impart such advice as would tend to retrieve his affairs. He decried the whole conduct of the war, imputing its disasters to want of system, combination, and intelligence. By uniformly following the French, we had yielded to them every advantage; wherever they dispatched a large force, we tardily pursued with a small one. Such was the case at the Chesapeak, at Jamaica, Barbadoes, and all the West India islands; nay, he expected another Chesapeak at Plymouth, and should not wonder to find a Chesapeak in the River Thames. He decried the war with Holland as a war of perfidy. From the cautious concealment of the measure, he expected some great achievement to compensate for the loss of reputation in so shameful a surprise. But, instead of an attack against the spice islands, Ceylon, or some other important

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place, St. Eustatia alone was captured; and he solemnly believed the surrender of Lord Cornwallis's army had been occasioned by the manner in which the General and Admiral had disposed of the stores. In conclusion, he quoted an observation of the late Lord Chatham: "If the present system is pursued, I will not "say that his Majesty will lose the crown; but his "affairs will be precipitated into such a state of ruin, "distraction, and calamity, that his crown will be "scarcely worth his wearing."

The Duke of Richmond, coinciding in Lord Shelburne's sentiments, carried his censures still further; the calamities of the reign, he said, should be attributed not to ambition in the enemies, but folly in the ministers of the Crown. He vehemently decried the representation of the people, and affirmed that the country was governed by clerks, each minister confining himself to his own office; and, consequently, instead of responsibility, union of opinion, and concerted measures, nothing was displayed but dissension, weakness, and corruption. All these faults in government originated in the interior cabinet; and, as a proof that such an influence existed, he quoted Lord Chatham's declaration, that "when he entered the King's "closet, he found the ground rotten, and himself "duped and deceived."

The Marquis of Rockingham drew a comparison between the King's accession and the present period. On the death of that great and good Prince, George II, he said, triumph and success attended our arms in every quarter of the globe: a Pitt directed the political machine, a Newcastle the finances, a Legge presided over the Exchequer, and an Anson over the navy, forming not only an able and upright, but, which was far more important in this country, a popular administration. These men had been compelled one by one to retire, and from that period every thing was conducted by favouritism and secret influence. Secret influence and lust of unconstitutional power had given birth to an attempt at rendering America as servile

and devoted as England had proved herself. This had occasioned and prolonged the war; and the assertion in the King's speech, that it originated in the restless ambition of the enemy, was therefore an arrant falsehood.

Lord Camden reprobrated the conduct of the war, attributing its miscarriages principally to the deranged state of the navy, to irresolution and want of vigour in the cabinet, and, above all, to the fatal error of continuing to bend our principal efforts against America. The subjugation of the colonies should now be rendered a secondary object; and all our exertions employed in restoring the navy to its pristine respect, effective strength, and wonted superiority. Though late, the experiment was worth making; and, if foiled, we must submit to Providence. In the last war, we retained the choice of attack, and confounded our enemies, who knew not where or how to defend themselves; panic and despair succeeded confusion, and victory was ours on every side.

The measures of government were specifically defended by Lord Stormont and the Earl of Hillsborough; but their arguments were not proportioned to the vigour of the attack: and the Lord Chancellor, while he passed the highest enconiums on the judgment and eloquence of Lord Camden, resisted the amendment, principally as it was contrary to the established forms of Parliament. It was rejected by a considerable majority*, and no more than three peers subscribed a short protest.

In the House of Commons, Mr. Fox moved an amendment similar to that of Lord Shelburne. He sarcastically applauded the ministry for engaging very young members to move and second the address†; a task which required the benefit of inexperience, the recommendation of ignorance. Though himself a young man, he could not be called a young member; he had seen the whole system of ministers, their pro-

* 75 to 31. † Mr. Percival and Mr. Thomas Orde.

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gressive madness, impolicy, or treachery: but their audacity in bringing such a speech to the House, and moving such an address, was to him a subject of astonishment, nay, of horror. Men unacquainted with the British constitution, and ignorant that the speech was contrived by a cabinet council, would pronounce it that of an arbitrary, despotic, hard-hearted, and unfeeling monarch; who, having involved the slaves, his subjects, in a ruinous and unnatural war, to glut his enmity, or satiate his revenge, was determined to persevere in spite of calamity, and even of fate. The general expectation was, that the King would have avowed, with regret, his having been deluded, and requested the assistance of Parliament in restoring peace, security, and happiness; but, instead of this, they had heard a speech, breathing vengeance, blood, misery, and rancour.

The mover of the address had observed, that there were members of Parliament so lost to duty, honour, and shame, as to express warm wishes for the success of the enemy, to glory in their conquests, and boast of the countenance they had given to rebellion; to such men must the calamities of the country be attributed. In reply to this observation, Mr. Fox quoted Lord Chatham, who, at the very commencement of the dispute, "thanked God that America resisted the "claims of the mother country." "But all the cala- "mities of the country," he continued, "are ascribed "to the wishes, the joy, and the speeches of opposition. "O miserable and unfortunate ministry! O blind and "incapable men! whose measures are framed with so "little foresight, and executed with so little firmness, "that they crumble to pieces and bring ruin on the "country, merely because one rash, weak, or wicked "man in the House of Commons makes a speech against "them. What despicable statesmen, who frame their "measures in so feeble and wretched a manner as to "make no provision for the contingencies of fortune, "nor for the rash or even wicked passions of indivi- "duals! Could they expect there would be no rash, no

" weak, no wicked men in the kingdom? or were they so " rash, so weak, or so wicked, as to contrive measures of " such a texture, that the intervention of any unfore- " seen circumstance broke them to pieces and destroyed " the empire?" Retrospective censures were deprecated; but ministers must bear to hear them; they must hear them on that day when the representatives of the people must recall to their ears the disgraceful and ruinous measures which had brought the kingdom to its present state. They must not only hear them in Parliament, but, he trusted, through the indignation and vengeance of an injured and undone people, they would hear of them at the tribunal of justice, and expiate them on the public scaffold. The day was approaching, it was at hand, when the people would no longer submit, nor the ministry escape. He would not say he believed they were in the pay of France; it was not possible for him to prove the fact; but they had served the *grand monarque* more faithfully and more successfully than ever ministers served a master. If the French king had exhausted his exchequer and drained his resources for their emolument, he cheaply purchased the aggrandizement of his kingdom; they had promoted the French aim of universal monarchy more than all the preceding ministers France had ever employed; nay, more than all the achievements of *Louis le Grand*. In support of these assertions, Mr. Fox reviewed the origin and conduct of the war, affirming that the loss of the army in Virginia, and the loss of thirteen provinces, must be solely ascribed to the influence of the crown. All the calamities of the nation were connected with the system and with the men in power. By changing the one *in toto*, and removing the others, the fountain head would be purified, and the whole stream no longer contaminated.

Several other members in opposition spoke in reproachful terms of the condition of the navy, and the general system of government. Mr. Thomas Pitt did not hesitate to affirm, " that there was no public, no " parliament, nor could government be conducted

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without bringing to an account those who had reduced the nation to its present disgraceful situation." He did not desire a change of ministry; no matter what puppets worked the dismal scene! Whether one low little set of men on one or on the other side of the House, while the secret poisoning influence remained, which had begun with and continued through the whole reign. He hoped to God the ministry would not be displaced till they had brought the affairs of the nation to such a crisis as would draw on them a suitable reward. He favoured the amendment; but, if it were carried, would not vote for the address, nor consent to a shilling of supply in support of a war to which the country gentlemen had unfortunately afforded too much countenance.

The reflections on the state of the navy were answered by Lord Mulgrave, who refuted many assertions by contradictory facts, and affirmed that at no previous period had so ample a marine been provided, a marine which had employed a hundred and eighteen thousand men. In the course of his speech, he advanced the extraordinary assertion, that Great Britain never was equal to France in a naval contest, when that power applied all her resources and strength to the equipment of a navy*. In the reigns of William III and Queen Anne, France was superior to Great Britain and Holland†. The present war was calamitous, but not disgraceful; nor could a period of history be produced, when the honour and spirit of the nation had risen to a more glorious height.

Lord North, in a short, but able speech, answered the philippic of Mr. Fox, treating with scorn the insinuation that Ministers received the pay of France; the leader of opposition did not believe it, nor did any man in the House, or in the kingdom. The misfor-

* This expression, somewhat too strongly stated in the parliamentary reports, occasioned some observations in print by Sir John Sinclair, which produced an explanation and vindication of his remarks from the noble Lord. See Sinclair's Thoughts on the Naval Strength of Great Britain, 2nd edition.

† The views of William on the continent turned his attention from a naval to a land force; nearly the same continental politics prevailed during the greater part of the reign of Queen Anne; therefore Lord Mulgrave's argument cannot by any means be deemed conclusive.

tunes of the nation had been attributed to the misconduct, incapacity, or treachery of ministers; but whatever might be their talents, their zeal in the service of their country was indisputable, and their errors those of the judgment, not the heart. The American war was prosecuted, not with the infamous design of aggrandizing the Crown at the expense of the constitution, and making the subjects slaves that the King might be despotic, but with a view of preserving intire and unbroken the old and venerable constitution of Government, composed of King, Lords, and Commons; for which our fathers had bled, and which Europe envied. The Americans had originally no objection to submit to the authority of the Crown, but objected to the interference of Parliament. They were adverse to the claims of Parliament, and not those of the Sovereign, and for the preservation of those resisted rights the war was commenced. "A "melancholy disaster has occurred in Virginia," he said; "but are we therefore to lie down and die? "No: it ought rather to impel, to urge, to animate; "for by bold and united exertions every thing may be "saved; by dejection and despair, every thing must "be lost." He would not be deterred by menaces of impeachment and the scaffold from striving to preserve the rights and legislative authority of Parliament. The war had been unfortunate, but not unjust; it was founded on right, and dictated by necessity; he had always thought so, and should the share he had taken in the maintaining the constitution lead to the scaffold, his opinions would remain unaltered.

Mr. Burke rose, indignant at this speech, which he termed equally imprudent and audacious; it froze his blood and harrowed up his soul. If men were untaught by experience, if neither calamities could make them feel, nor the voice of God make them wise, what had this poor, fallen, miserable, undone country to hope? The war was not unfortunate, but disgraceful: the former epithet could only apply to occurrences in which fortune alone was concerned; but the present war exhibited neither plan nor foresight. Victories

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and defeats, towns taken or evacuated, generals appointed or recalled, all were alike, all calamitous. Victory inspired hope, defeat, despair; but both instigated us to go on, and both were therefore calamitous. The King's speech, however, was the greatest calamity of all; for that shewed the disposition of ministers, not to retreat an inch, but to plunge deeper, and augment the disgrace and unhappiness of the nation. Who could patiently hear of rights, which had cost so much, and which were likely to cost our all? "Good God!" he exclaimed, "are we yet to be "told of the rights for which we went to war. Oh, "excellent rights! Oh, valuable rights! that have "cost Britain thirteen provinces, four islands, a hun- "dred thousand men, and more than seventy millions "of money! Oh, wonderful rights! that have lost to "Great Britain her empire on the ocean, her boasted, "grand, and substantial superiority, which made the "world bend before her! Oh, inestimable rights! that "have taken from us our rank among nations, our im- "portance abroad, and our happiness at home; that "have deprived us of our trade and manufactures; "reduced us from the most flourishing empire in the "world, to one of the most compact, unenviable powers "on the face of the globe! Oh, wonderful rights! that "are likely to take from us all that yet remains! We "had a right to tax America; and as we had a right, "we must do it. We must risk every thing, forfeit "every thing, think of no consequences, take no con- "sideration into view but our right; consult no ability, "nor measure our right with our power, but must "have our right. Oh, miserable and infatuated minis- "ters! Miserable and undone country! not to know "that right signifies nothing without might; that the "claim without the power of enforcing it, was nuga- "tory and idle in the copyhold of rival states, or of "immense bodies. Oh! says a silly man, full of his "prerogative of dominion over a few beasts of the field, "there is excellent wool on the back of a wolf, and "therefore he must be sheared. What! shear a wolf? "Yes. But will he comply? have you considered

" the trouble? how will you get this wool? Oh; I " have considered nothing, and I will consider nothing " but my right: a wolf is an animal that has wool; " all animals that have wool are to be shorn, and there- " fore I will shear the wolf. This was just the kind of " reasoning urged by the minister, and this the counsel " he had given."

Several members asserted that the intended effect of the address was to pledge the House to a prosecution of the war. This the ministers most positively denied. Lord George Germaine, after lamenting the calamitous disaster that had befallen Lord Cornwallis, said, he was always ready to avow and justify the part he had taken. He had acted from the purest motives; he was not enamoured of his situation; he had never solicited office; he had been called to it, and, although he would not be brow-beaten or clamoured out of it, yet when it should please his royal master that he should resign, it would please him. He had never believed that we could reduce America by force of arms; all he believed and desired was, to support and give efficacy to the struggles of the loyalists. He always understood, and still believed, that they were numerous, and wanted only the assistance of England to give them decisive ascendancy. He would never be the minister who should assent to a reconciliation on the terms of American independence. This country depended on America for its very existence. Take away America, and we should sink into perfect insignificance; preserve it, and it was yet the brightest jewel in the Crown.

After a protracted discussion, the amendment was negatived*.

On bringing up the report of the address, the debate was renewed, and principally distinguished by an eloquent harangue from Mr. Pitt, who rose to vent those sentiments of indignation which rendered his situation too painful to be endured in silence. Duty to his sovereign and his country impelled him to en- 28th Nov.

* 218 to 129.

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deavour at preventing Parliament from precipitately pledging the House to prosecute the American war, and persevere in that fatal system which had led a once flourishing and glorious nation, step by step, to a situation the most calamitous and disgraceful; a situation which threatened the final dissolution of the empire. He was unable to account for the confidence of ministers in proposing an address which pledged Parliament to measures, of which not even a plan or outline was submitted to their consideration. What could occasion so stedfast an adherence to the American war? Was there any national object in pursuit? Certainly none! In real truth, the object of contest was an appendage to the office of First Lord of the Treasury, too dear to be relinquished; it was the grand pillar, built on the ruins of the constitution, by which he held his situation; the great means of extending the influence of the Crown, on which alone he placed his security. But how could ministers expect the confidence of Parliament, who had among themselves no bond of union? "I am satisfied in my soul," he exclaimed, "that were I to go from one end of the "Treasury bench to the other, and ask every man "there if he could trust his neighbour, they would "all answer in the negative; and yet they expect from "Parliament that confidence which they have not in "each other."

Mr. Pitt then analyzed the different reasons assigned on the preceding day for continuing the war. Lord North had argued that the war was just and necessary. As to its justice, no discussion was necessary; the whole universe had heard and seen enough to decide on that head; the term necessity, as applied to its prolongation, was not easily understood; it could mean nothing short of physical necessity; and to say that an end could not be put to the war, if Parliament were so resolved, was an absurdity too gross for animadversion. Lord George Germaine had rested all his hope on the more mild, lenient, and moderate expectation of the practicability of dispatching a sufficient force to enable the numerous friends of Great Britain to conquer their

opponents. To appreciate the wisdom of this conceit, Mr. Pitt recommended a retrospect of the war; the events of the last campaign, and, above all, the tenth article of Lord Cornwallis's capitulation, where all the friends of Great Britain, all the loyalists who had been treacherously deluded to join the army, were left to the civil justice of their country. He could not define what was the civil justice of America; but if the same treacherous system which had long disgraced Great Britain were persevered in, civil justice might overtake those who were more proper objects of its operation than the unfortunate wretches who had sacrificed their lives and fortunes to the empty promises of an abandoned administration.

When this speech was concluded, it is said* a buzz of applause pervaded the House, and it was some time before the Lord Advocate of Scotland could obtain a hearing. Members who supported administration were most pointed in their eulogies upon it. Mr. Dundas said that the lustre of abilities and splendour of eloquence which it displayed proved that great talents had descended, in an hereditary line, from a parent uncommonly gifted to a son equally blessed; and Mr. Courtenay observed, that Mr. Pitt's splendid diction, manly elocution, and brilliant periods, his pointed logic, conveyed in a torrent of rapid and impressive eloquence, brought strongly to his recollection that great and able statesman whose memory every grateful and generous Briton must revere.

Mr. Burke adverted to Lord Cornwallis's surrender, and to the horrible spectacle which must meet the eyes of a prince of the blood†, who could not sail along the American coast, without beholding the faithful adherents of his father hanging in quarters on every headland. The blood of all the Americans who had lost their lives in consequence of that capitulation, rested on the head of Lord Cornwallis or the Ministry; and he would make those walls re-echo with it till the

* Parliamentary History, vol. xxii, p. 735.

† Prince William Henry, afterward Duke of Clarence and King William the Fourth, who then served in a subordinate station in the fleet.

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noble Earl, for whose virtues he had the highest regard, accounted for a conduct so dishonourable to the British name, so disgraceful to humanity. He compared the surrender of York Town with that of Saratoga, and branded the Ministers as the cause of those disasters, and the address as the most hypocritical, infamous, abandoned, and lying paper, the House had ever been called on to vote.

Mr. Courtenay mentioned with indignation the invidious comparison between two unsuccessful generals. Lord Cornwallis had fallen, not ignobly, by the united arms of France and America: he had not fallen in the pride of presumption by the *posse comitatus;* but admired and respected even by the enemy. "His claims," the generous orator exclaimed, "are wreathed with "laurels; he is an honour to his profession, who will "add lustre to the highest dignities that can be con- "ferred on him; and the sacred and applauding voice "of the people will sanctify the choice of a discerning "Sovereign."

The report was received*.

30th Nov. Debates on the capture of St. Eustatia. 4th. Dec.

Lord Cornwallis was not alone exposed to animadversion; Sir George Rodney and General Vaughan were arraigned with the utmost severity for their conduct on the capture of St. Eustatia. In the last session, Mr. Burke had moved for an address on the subject, describing, in a vehement and acrimonious speech, the illegal, unjust, and cruel proceedings of the captors. This island, he said, had risen, like another Tyre, upon the waves, to communicate to all countries and climates the conveniences and necessaries of life. Its wealth was prodigious, arising from its industry and the nature of its commerce. Being in no state of defence, for it possessed only fifty-five soldiers, and a building which, in courtesy or compliment, might be termed a fort, it had been surrendered by the Dutch commander without any stipulation, in an implicit reliance on the discretion, the mercy, and the clemency of the conquerors. How had these qualities

May 14th.

* 131 to 54.

been shewn? In a general confiscation of all property, public and private, Dutch and British; the wealth of the opulent, the goods of the merchant, the utensils of the artizan, the necessaries of the poor, were seized on, and, in one moment, a sentence of general beggary pronounced on a whole people. In addition, the warehouses were locked up, their books seized, together with all the letters and private papers. The parties plundered were most obdurately refused a portion of their own stores to prevent them from starving. To the dishonour of humanity, in this enlightened age, the persecution began with the Jews. In common with the other inhabitants, they were ordered to be conveyed from the island, and only one day was given for preparation. To the number of one hundred and one, they were confined in a place called a weigh-house, and searched for property they might have concealed. From the lining of one of their coats two hundred Johannes were taken, from another nine hundred, and from the whole party to the value of eight thousand pounds. Nor was the persecution confined to the Jews; all Americans, whether they had retired to avoid taking a part against Great Britain, or to assist the Americans; all French inhabitants, all Dutchmen, late citizens of Amsterdam, and, finally, all people who were not settled inhabitants of the island, were ordered to depart. Of the Jews, thirty were carried to the neighbouring island of St. Christopher's, and the rest were permitted to return. The assembly of St. Christopher's had remonstrated in vain; the Admiral had given as a reason for confiscating their property, that they used the island only as a place of deposit for their goods, to supply the enemies of their country. If they supplied the enemy, so did the captors, for they advertised the sale of the property at a public auction, invited all the neutral islands to come in and purchase, and that small vessels should be sold for its conveyance. It was accordingly transported to French and American settlements, and to the Danish islands of St. Croix and St. Thomas, from which the Americans, French, and Spaniards, might be supplied. Mr. Burke added

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many particular narratives of private calamity and individual suffering, and enforced his motion by arguments drawn from the law of nations and the general rules of honour and morality.

In answer to these reflections, which were sustained by Mr. Fox and other eminent speakers, it was observed, that to make such charges, while the subjects of it were absent on the service of their country, was at least premature, and the accusations themselves unfounded. Pictures of private calamity would move the passions of the humane, and, when drawn by a hand so masterly as that of a Burke, would possess sufficient force of colouring to strike and wring the heart; but, in questions of general policy, the good of all must be preferred to the convenience of the few; private calamity might result from public advantage. It was not to be expected that the stores taken at St. Eustatia should be returned; if they were, the capture of the island would be of no avail. The wrongs inflicted on the Jews were not denied; but the whole transaction occurred without the knowledge of the Commanders-in-Chief, who, as soon as they were apprized of it, expressed great displeasure, ordered restitution and reinstated the injured parties in their houses. Sir George Rodney was too brave a man to be cruel, too disinterested to be rapacious. The case of St. Eustatia was new in the history of nations. The island had been the property of our ally, and the measures which had been taken were justified by policy, by necessity, and by the laws of war. The confiscation of property and banishment of the people were necessary to secure the conquest. The inhabitants, all inimical to Great Britain, were become so numerous that the rents of houses in the principal town amounted to the amazing sum of a million of money. These and many similar arguments did not satisfy Mr. Burke, who made a strenuous reply, and lost his motion on a a division*.

Although foiled in this attempt, Mr. Burke ap-

* 160 to 86.

prized Sir George Rodney and General Vaughan that he should demand copies of their instructions for proceedings at St. Eustatia; and, both professing themselves ready to meet the inquiry, he made his motion. His speech was a series of sarcastic reflections on the commanders, whom he represented as cowardly and cruel in their meditated attack on St. Vincent's, and wanton and rapacious plunderers of the inhabitants of St. Eustatia. He displayed the absurdity of selling the stores in such a manner as to furnish the enemy with supplies which they could no otherwise have obtained; and accused the Admiral of promoting their successes, by lingering on the spot to which his interest fixed him, while the French fleet was reinforced and Tobago taken. He hoped the two commanders would not rest contented with self-approbation and the support of friends: a man might say— 4th Dec.

> ——Populus me sibilat at mihi plaudo,
> Ipse domi simul ac nummos contemplor in arcâ;

But justice and the public would require something more. He should persevere in urging inquiry: the character of accuser was odious only when the object of inculpation was weak, oppressed, or indigent; but it was not odious to prosecute guilt in stars and ribbons*, guilt rewarded and countenanced by the official and the opulent.

The Admiral said he appeared before St. Eustatia for the purpose of cutting off supplies from the enemy, and with the fixed determination not to grant any terms to the inhabitants, who, though nominally friends to England, had been the allies of the enemy. Many residents, who called themselves Englishmen, were not ashamed to supply warlike stores for the destruction of their country; and, as he considered such men undeserving of favour, he determined to shew them none. Far from suffering stores to be conveyed to the enemy's islands, directly or circuitously, he had ordered them all to his Majesty's depôts at Antigua;

* Rodney had received the Order of the Bath in November, 1780.

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and, to insure obedience, had deprived the ships destined to convey them of their provisions, save a bare sufficiency for the voyage. Instead of remaining inactive, as had been insinuated, he had planned two expeditions, one against Curaçoa, the other against Surinam, when he received advice that a French fleet of ten or twelve sail, with about seventy transports, was sailing for Martinique, and dispatched Sir Samuel Hood, with fifteen sail, to encounter them. His intention afterward to fight De Grasse was disconcerted by intelligence conveyed to the French admiral; and he detailed facts which fully shewed him exempt from blame in not succouring Tobago, or preventing the catastrophe in Virginia.

General Vaughan, protesting on his honour that he was not directly or indirectly one shilling enriched by the capture of St. Eustatia, asserted that he had treated the enemy with the utmost lenity; the Jews, who were selected as peculiar objects of commiserative complaint, had been shipped at their own desire for St. Thomas's; but when the General learned that they had been landed at St. Christopher's, he caused a restitution of their houses and property; and, in testimony of their satisfaction at his conduct, he produced to the House an address from the whole body in synagogue, expressive of their happiness in living under the mild government of George III*. Upon the whole, he had acted to the best of his judgment for his country's good, and not his own; and, as he was neither a lawyer nor a merchant, he should not again in similar circumstances act differently. The motion was negatived†.

30th Nov. Supplies opposed 12th Dec. Motions against the war by Sir James Lowther.

In debating the army estimates, the grand principle of the war came again under discussion, opposition at first adopting the unprecedented measure of opposing the supply *in toto*. On the failure of this wild attempt‡, Sir James Lowther interrupted the order of

* The expulsion and plunder of the Jews was afterward (4th February 1782) referred to a committee on the petition of Mr. Hohen, and motion of Mr. Burke, and a report presented (14th May) reflecting great discredit on the character of the General and Admiral.

† 163 to 89. ‡ It was over-ruled by 172 to 77.

the day for the army estimates, by moving a resolution, "that the war carried on in North America had "been ineffectual, either in protecting the King's sub- "jects, or defeating the dangerous designs of his ene- "mies." If this proposition was assented to, he promised to follow it with another, "that all further "attempts to reduce the revolted colonies were repug- "nant to the true interests of the kingdom, as tending "to weaken its efforts against its ancient and power- "ful enemies."

Mr. Powys seconded the motion in a long and able speech, displaying the illusory and fallacious nature of every hope to subjugate America, and describing the declining state of the nation, and the ill-timed inflexibility of government, by parallels, in the glowing language of Gibbon, from the reigns of the Roman Emperors Valentinian III and Honorius. He exhorted the House to consider the nature of the war, which was not waged between rival states for a barrier or boundary, but so constituted that every conclusion must be unfavourable to Great Britain. The whole war had been conducted in delusion; every promise broken, every assertion falsified, every object relinquished. It was now a war of revenue, now of supremacy; now a war of coercion, then of friendship; and thus the people, the House, and particularly the country gentlemen, had been deluded, confounded, abused, and cheated. Evasion led but to evasion; trick to trick; repeated losses had converted firmness into obstinacy, and an attachment to ancient principles of party would now be evidence of frenzy. It was no longer time for men to group together, or indulge in narrow-minded distinctions, when every honest heart and hand in the kingdom should level the pitiful boundaries of separation, and unite to avert the wreck with which this unhappy nation was so imminently threatened. The country gentlemen, long deceived, could be deluded no more. No idea of American revenue remained, no idea of alleviating the burdens of Britain by carrying on the war; there was no other idea, and could be no other motive, than to preserve the power,

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the consequence, and the emoluments that flowed from it. No inconvenience could result from declaring that the continent of America should no longer be the theatre of war; on the contrary, the European enemies of Great Britain would become alarmed for their numerous possessions, and a general consternation would spread among them for the safety of their wide-extended dominions.

Lord North acknowledged the motions to be fair, moderate, free from passion, not founded on personal resentment, and, as to style, perfectly unexceptionable; but refused to concur in them, chiefly because they formed a parliamentary advertisement to the enemy of the manner in which the next campaign would be conducted; and moved the order of the day. He avowed, however, his opinion, "*that it would neither be* "*wise nor right to prosecute the war in America any longer* "*on a continental plan*, that is, *by sending fresh armies to* "*march through the colonies, in order by those marches to* "*subdue America to obedience.*" Even this acknowledgment he would have withheld; but it was plainly legible in the estimates, the moderation of which shewed that government had no intention of substituting an army for that of Lord Cornwallis. Posts must be maintained and defended in case of attack, and the British commerce must be protected against American cruisers; but Sir James Lowther's motions would prevent the accomplishment of all these objects.

Lord George Germaine coincided in opinion with Lord North, but declared that, whenever the House adopted a motion which amounted to a dereliction of America, he would retire; for, in his opinion, the moment American independence was acknowledged, the British empire was ruined. Mr. Dunning, though he acquiesced in Sir James Lowther's motions, asserted the same sentiment, adding, with uncommon warmth, that the proposition to declare America independent was little short of high treason*.

Many conspicuous members on both sides addressed the chair; but the motion for the order of the day was

* Annual Register, 1782, p. 146.

at length carried by a majority of forty-one only*, twenty of the usual supporters of administration having joined the opposing party†.

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This debate was renewed in the next sitting of the House, and was chiefly distinguished by an eloquent speech from Mr. Pitt, tending to prove the total disagreement in principle among the members of the cabinet. He described the two parts of Lord North's statement as repugnant to each other; he first said it was resolved no longer to prosecute the war on a continental plan; and then, as if shocked at having uttered any thing which seemed satisfactory, or which could be understood, startled at the sound of his own words, and, apprehensive he had dropped an expression by which he might be bound, he added explanatory expressions which defeated the meaning of his original declaration. Lord North said the war was no longer to be conducted on its original plan, or with an intention of subduing America by force; Lord George Germaine, that all the ministers were agreed in not abandoning the objects of the war. "The secretary "for America," he continued, "is of opinion that "Great Britain will be ruined if the independence of "that country is granted, but he gives it only as his "own judgment, without knowing the opinions of "others! Is it to be credited that a ministry, ignorant of "each other's opinions, are unanimous! The absurdity "is too monstrous to be received, especially at a mo- "ment when they are more palpably disunited than "ever." From a comparison of their speeches, he strengthened his assertion of their disunion, and averred that one or both had the meanness to continue in office, and stand responsible for measures which they disapproved. He vehemently invoked the House to extricate themselves from the disgrace of being subservient to the despicable views of such men. In only one thing they were agreed, and that was, in their resolution to destroy the empire they were called upon to save; and this he feared they would accomplish,

14th Dec. Debate renewed.

* 230 to 179. † Annual Register, ubi sup.

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before the indignation of a great and suffering people should fall on their heads in merited punishment. "And God grant," he added, "that that punishment "be not so long delayed, as to involve a great and "innocent family, who, though they can have had no "share in the guilt, may, and most likely will, suffer "the consequences."

Sir George Savile ridiculed the address, and compared the Crown and Parliament to dancers of a minuet to a tune of the minister's composing. The Crown led off one way, the Parliament in a similar step to the opposite corner; they then joined hands, and the dance terminated as it began. If ministers were to put into the King's mouth the line, "What beauties does Flora disclose," the House would echo, "How sweet are her smiles upon Tweed." In a more serious tone, he insisted that the address, though demanded as merely complimentary, was intended to be combined with other measures, and ultimately to delude Parliament into a continuance of the American war. He compared ministers to the Spartan, who, in a sea-engagement, swam to a galley and seized it with his right hand, which was instantly chopped off. He then renewed the effort with his left, and met a similar catastrophe. The sailors in the galley then asked if he meant to persevere; the Spartan answered, not in the same way, and seized his object with his teeth. Thus administration had lost two armies (both their hands) in attempts on America, yet were they, like the Lacedemonian, determined to proceed. But they should remember, and he warned them, that when the Lacedemonian did proceed, he was deprived of his head.

Although this debate was long and vehement, yet, as the aim of the motion was to delay the supplies, the division was less favourable to opposition than that of the preceding day*.

19th Dec. Supplies opposed in the Lords.

An attempt, made by the Marquis of Rockingham, to prevent the third reading of the malt and land-tax

* 166 to 84.

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bills till after the recess, was also rejected, though well supported by the mover, and productive of a long debate.

3rd and 17th December. Debates on the treatment of Laurens.

No other transaction in either House, previous to the recess, claimed particular notice, except a motion by Mr. Burke, on the subject of Mr. Laurens, who was still detained in the tower. He painted the ill-treatment of this prisoner in glowing colours, and made many sarcastic contrasts between his conduct, character, and pretensions, and those of his supposed oppressors; narrating the efforts used for effecting his liberation by means of an exchange of prisoners, and reading to the House a correspondence which had passed between himself and Dr. Franklin on the subject, from which it appeared that the Americans had threatened, if Laurens was detained, to revoke the parole allowed to General Burgoyne, and to insist on his surrendering himself to personal captivity*. Lord George Germaine refuted the charge of cruel treatment in the most satisfactory manner, by a letter from Laurens himself, written early in his confinement†, thanking ministers for the indulgences he received. A petition from him was afterwards presented, complaining, in vague and general terms, of his rigorous confinement, and praying relief. Mr. Burke declared his intention to move for a bill regulating the exchange of prisoners, and amending the act suspending the habeas corpus; but it was rendered unnecessary by the discharge of Mr. Laurens.

20th.

* Franklin's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 31.
† November 1780.

CHAPTER THE FORTY-FOURTH.

1781—1782.

Proceedings in public meetings.—Petition of the Common-hall of London for peace and a change of Ministry.—Admiral Kempenfelt's unsuccessful expedition.—Capture of Saint Christopher's—Nevis—Montserrat—and Minorca.—Fox's motions on the ill success of the Navy.—Motions in both Houses respecting the conduct and characters of individuals—on the treatment of Colonel Haynes—for an inquiry into the causes of Lord Cornwallis's surrender—on Lord Sackville's peerage—on the promotion of General Arnold.—Fox's renewed motion respecting the Navy.—General Conway's motion against the war.—Altercation between Lord North and Colonel Barré.—Debates on the new taxes. — General Conway's second motion. — The Ministry in a minority.—Bill to enable the King to make peace with America. — Lord John Cavendish's motion against the Ministry.—Lord North declares the Cabinet dissolved. — His farewell address to the House. — Lord Shelburne's intended motion.—Character of Lord North.

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ALTHOUGH the adjournment of Parliament was, as usual, strenuously resisted, it was a measure beneficial to opposition. The fabric of administration was visibly tottering; the country gentlemen had shewn a disposition to desert the Ministry, although they would not impede the exertions of Government. The divisions in the cabinet were more strongly reported, and the assertion daily gained additional credence; and the people saw with growing impatience the protraction of an expensive war, all the measures of which seemed to be blasted in their very commencement.

Proceedings in public

The rage for public meetings, clubs, and committees of delegates, still continued, and projects of

reform, and petitions, were generally agitated. Before the adjournment of Parliament, a Common-hall of the City of London voted an address, remonstrance, and petition to the King, reprobating his speech from the throne, and the conduct of Ministers; recapitulating the disasters of the war and their effects; declaring their abhorrence of it as an unnatural and unfortunate contest, and requiring the dismission of all the King's advisers, both public and secret*. A similar address was voted by the electors of Westminster, whom Mr. Fox convened in Westminster-hall, and whom he addressed in a long harangue, formed on the popular model, that of comparing the sentiments and conduct of Lord Chatham with the present Administration. The freeholders of Middlesex and Surrey, the West India planters, and many other bodies, adopted the same measure, with only slight variations as to terms.

meetings. 6th December. London petition for peace and change of Ministry.

11th Dec. Other petitions.

Yet the principle of the war was not unpopular: the public burthens, and the general failure of success, occasioned great irritability in the nation; but still, any appearance of vigour, or any important success obtained by the arms of Britain, would have reanimated the nation, or reconciled to the continuance of war, many who were now most clamorous for peace.

But, although the Ministry had adopted wise and vigorous plans for restoring the preponderance of the British arms, no encouraging events had yet occurred. Intelligence having been received of the equipment and destination of a fleet from Brest, to re-inforce and supply the East and West India squadrons, Admiral Kempenfelt was dispatched to intercept it, with twelve sail of the line, one ship of fifty guns, and four frigates. The information given to government was correct in every particular, except the force of the enemy; the British Admiral met them at the distance of fifty leagues from Ushant, and, as they were scattered by a storm, succeeded in taking twenty transports, laden with ordnance, stores, and provisions, and conveying

Admiral Kempenfelt's unsuccessful expedition.

* On the presentation of this paper, attempts were made to revive the old contest respecting the King's receiving it on the throne; and a Common-hall passed a resolution on the subject. See Annual Register, 1782, p. 195.

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nearly eleven hundred troops, and five hundred and forty-eight seamen. Perceiving the enemy forming the line of battle, Kempenfelt prepared for the encounter; but discovering, on a nearer approach, that they had nineteen sail of the line, some of which were of the largest dimension, two ships armed en flute, and a great proportion of frigates, he reluctantly declined hazarding an attack, and returned to England. The value and quality of the prizes proved the importance of the expedition, and added to the disappointment of the public; the Ministry were loudly censured for their deficiency in information, or negligence of duty; and, before the recess, the House of Commons had already resounded with the complaints of opposition.

Capture of St. Christopher's,

Subsequent events, the intelligence of which arrived during the renewed session of Parliament, and influenced its proceedings, were equally unfavourable to administration. The Marquis de Bouillé, after recapturing St. Eustatia, and preparing for the reconquest of Demerary and Issequibo, proceeded to the attack of St. Christopher's, where he landed eight thousand men, protected by De Grasse's fleet of thirty-two sail of the line. Basseterre, the capital of the island, built of wood, and destitute of means of defence, separately capitulated, and the French fleet anchored in the road, while the troops and militia, amounting to nine hundred and fifty men, under General Fraser and Governor Shirley, repaired to Brimstone-hill, an unassailable eminence, but requiring a much more numerous garrison, and extremely deficient in stores and artillery. The French General, being obliged to besiege the hill in form, his followers, with vast labour and difficulty, conveyed the requisite artillery, and opened the trenches. Meanwhile, Sir Samuel Hood, with only twenty-two ships of the line, quitted Barbadoes, resolved to hazard an engagement with the superior force of France, for the protection of so valuable an island as St. Christopher's. As soon as he had formed his line of battle, De Grasse, desirous to gain room for advantageous action, quitted his anchorage, and stood out to sea; the British Admiral, with mas-

11th January, 1782.

25th January.

terly judgment and presence of mind, lured him still further from the shore, and then placed his own fleet in the situation which his opponent had quitted. De Grasse, after ineffectual efforts to cut off the rear of the British squadron, and two resolute attempts on the whole line while at anchor, had the mortification to witness the complete interception of all communication between himself and the army.

The French General, however, continued the siege of Brimstone-hill with unremitting vigour, and prevented all correspondence between the British fleet and the garrison. Yet the critical state of his enterprize inspired alarm; Sir George Rodney was daily expected with reinforcements from England, and De Bouillé, having lost nearly a thousand men during the siege, accelerated the surrender by threatening to burn the plantations, and renew the devastation which he had committed at Tobago. The militia in the garrison were too much interested in this menace not to press their commanders to capitulate; and the French General acceded to every requisition they made, respecting either public or private property, the garrison, or the inhabitants at large. General Fraser and Governor Shirley were exempted from the terms imposed on prisoners of war; the former being allowed to rejoin his regiment, and the latter to resume his government at Antigua.

13th Feb.

Admiral Hood, having seen the French destroy the batteries at Basseterre, and their proceedings, which indicated despair, entertained most sanguine hopes, and was proportionally irritated when the surrender was made without consulting him; but he secured the safety of his squadron by slipping all his cables in the night, and getting under weigh so silently, that the enemy's fleet offered neither obstruction nor pursuit. The small islands of Nevis and Montserrat being also reduced, Barbadoes and Antigua were the only leeward islands remaining in the possession of Great Britain.

Nevis and Montserrat.

The capture of Minorca also occasioned lively dissatisfaction. Fort St. Philip's was garrisoned by two thousand six hundred and ninety-two men, including

Capture of Minorca.

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four hundred invalid sailors, a marine corps, and a few Greeks and Corsicans; the ditch and subterranean defences were cut out of the living rock, and exceedingly strong, but the upper works were not proportionately calculated for resistance, and the garrison did not exceed a moiety of the requisite number. The besieging force consisted of sixteen thousand regular troops, with a hundred and nine pieces of the heaviest cannon, and thirty-six great mortars; yet the Duc de Crillon, who commanded the expedition, did not blush to attempt corrupting the governor's integrity by the proffer of a bribe. General Murray answered the detestable proposal in terms of indignant reproof, reminding the tempter of the regard due to the honour of his own family, which was not, however, more illustrious than that of the General. The progress of the siege was more honourable to de Crillon than its outset. By a judicious disposition of his force, he cut off all supply from the country, and, by a well-directed and incessant cannonade and bombardment, rendered casemates and souterrains the only abodes of safety. Although the care of the British government had supplied all necessaries for subsistence and medicine, even to profusion, the garrison, in consequence of the privation of vegetables, were afflicted with the scurvy, which, attended with putrid fevers and dysentery, raged with pestilential virulence. Their zeal produced acts of uncommon heroism; a well-conducted and spirited sally put them in possession of Cape Mola, de Crillon's head-quarters; their batteries destroyed a powder magazine, and sunk a ship freighted with artillery, bombs, and stores; but these temporary successes were unavailing; and some unhappy differences between the Governor and Lieutenant Governor rendered defence still more hopeless. Disease became at length too powerful for the efforts of medicine; the effective garrison was reduced to six hundred, and even these could not long be kept from the hospital; the surgeons remonstrated to the Governor, that a further delay of capitulation would only occasion the unavailing sacrifice of a few devoted victims, whom an enlarged

scene of respiration and wholesome nutriment alone could rescue from the jaws of death. The besiegers readily granted honourable terms, and testified heroic regret at the sight of this brave band of invalids, marching through their disproportioned ranks to pile their arms. The indignation expressed by the garrison in this last act of prostration, was recorded with honourable admiration by the enemy, who soon forgot that title, and buried all semblance of hostility in generous cares for the health, and liberal supplies to the necessities of the vanquished.

20th Jan. Fox's motion on the ill success of the navy.

Before these transactions occurred, the sitting of Parliament was resumed, and the operations of opposition commenced by a motion of Mr. Fox for an inquiry into the ill success of the naval forces. If there had remained in the House either nerve, honesty, or independence, Mr. Fox declared he would have required the removal of Lord Sandwich; but such were the evil effects of influence, that the understanding as well as the heart of Parliament was poisoned. Opposition had been accused, he said, of causing the continuance in office of the first Lord of the Admiralty, by their frequent efforts to remove him; they had also been accused of leaguing with Dr. Franklin, with America, with France, with Spain, and of contributing to the independence of the colonies. Better would it have been for Great Britain that they had supported America, France, Spain, and Holland, than that they had leagued with administration. Without the uniform aid of such a ministry, in vain would Franklin have been wise, Washington brave, Maurepas, de Sartine, and de Castries, vigilant, crafty, and politic; in vain might America have been firm, the House of Bourbon full of resources, vigour and energy; and in vain might Holland, our ancient ally, have proved a powerful adherent to our enemies. The inquiry for which he moved would resolve itself into two parts; whether the first Lord of the Admiralty had the means of procuring a navy equal to the exigencies of the state; and whether he employed the force he really possessed with wisdom and ability. Mr. Fox then reviewed the

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whole conduct of the navy, since 1775, shewing that, in every instance, important expeditions had been neglected, deferred, or improvidently and inadequately sustained. He dwelt on late transactions with peculiar severity; Rodney had indulged the country with frequent promises that he would give a good account of the enemy in the West Indies, while all his achievments amounted only to a few drawn battles. He had been employed in the despicable plunder of St. Eustatia, while Tobago was taken; and the Admiral could not find leisure to prevent the catastrophe of Lord Cornwallis. But Kempenfelt's expedition was the most abandoned of all; he was sent with an inferior force to intercept the enemy, while many ships of war were employed in the less important service of preventing the Dutch trade. Providence, our constant friend, threw a few transports into his hands, and dispersed others in a storm, and the Admiral returned to port, instead of remaining to harass the French fleet and impede their progress in an united, compact body. Parliament had too long acted from their hopes, but must now yield to their judgment, and no longer sport with the feelings of a great, suffering nation, nor presume to ruin a people for the sake of an individual.

Captain John Luttrell explained several points in which the public had been misled and deceived. Lord Hawke, he said, had not left the navy in so flourishing a situation as was represented; neither was he in fault, his efforts having been cramped by the parsimony of Parliament. During Lord Sandwich's administration, large and liberal supplies had been granted, and were faithfully applied; for never, since England had a navy, were the yards so full of timber and stores. Yet he would not contend that no mismanagement existed; there were abundant errors in the conduct of the navy, the first remedy for which would be the restoration of harmony, confidence, and unanimity. Of old, when an Anson, a Hawke, a Boscawen, a Saunders, and a Keppel commanded, all was cordiality, affection, and zeal; the Admirals took pride in instructing their inferiors; the road to improvement was open for all; and

the differences of individuals were accommodated by the intervention of their superiors. Now all was party, disunion, and jealousy; officers no longer had access to the tables of their superiors; they never met but on duty, and consequently had no confidence in each other. For this there was no remedy but calling into service those veterans whose gallantry, skill, and experience were generally acknowledged; as the present commanders of fleets were, with few exceptions, but young captains at the termination of last war. He censured the inquiry as an impolitic measure, calculated only to keep alive the dissensions in the navy, and to delude Parliament by the production of collusive witnesses, who would, as formerly, laugh in the lobby at their own successful impostures.

Lord Mulgrave defended the general conduct of the naval war; and Mr. Fitzherbert imputed the deficiency of the navy to the want of shipwrights. The French had three thousand of these artificers at Brest, while the King's yard at Portsmouth contained only eight hundred. Thus the English ships were slowly built; and while materials abounded, labourers could not be procured. The causes of this defect were the low prices, and the small wages afforded in the royal yards, compared with those of private shipbuilders.

Lord North declared that Lord Sandwich was no less desirous than himself of a full and fair investigation; and the motion passed without a division, Captain Luttrell interposing his single negative. Several animated debates were maintained respecting the papers to be demanded from the Admiralty, in which Mr. Pitt displayed his wonted eloquence, with a surprising facility in the arrangement of business. All the documents required were furnished, and, at the first discussion of the committee, a call of the House was ordered.

7th February. After the papers had been read, Mr. Fox, in an eloquent speech, renewed the charges against Lord Sandwich, and concluded by moving that, "during the "year 1781, naval affairs had been grossly mis-

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"managed." After an animated debate, the vote of the committee, though favourable, was by no means flattering to government, as an attendance of three hundred and thirty-eight members produced in their favour a majority of twenty-two only*.

Personal motions in both Houses.

The defection of the country gentlemen from the cause of administration now inspired opposition with the most sanguine hopes; and questions affecting the conduct of ministers, and the characters of individuals connected with them, were brought forward with diligence, and debated with increasing acrimony.

31st January and 4th Feb.

The Duke of Richmond's respecting Colonel Haynes.

The Duke of Richmond, in making a motion respecting the execution of Colonel Haynes, animadverted with great severity on the conduct of Lord Rawdon and Lieutenant-Colonel Balfour, respecting which, however, he afterwards made satisfactory explanations.

7th, 11th Feb. Motions for papers respecting America.

The Duke of Chandos demanded an inquiry into the causes of the surrender at York Town, and copies of the ministerial correspondence with Sir Henry Clinton in the year 1781; both which propositions were, after violent debates, agreed to; but no consequences resulted.

Resignation of Lord George Germaine.

Lord George Germaine, disagreeing with other members of the cabinet on the future conduct of the war, resigned his office of Secretary of State for America, which was bestowed on Mr. Welbore Ellis, and was raised to the peerage by the title of Lord Viscount Sackville.

11th Feb. 9th Feb. His peerage.

7th February. Motions respecting it.

On the report that this mark of royal favour was intended, the Marquis of Carmarthen, not prevented by the consideration of the severe prosecution of his ancestor, the Earl of Danby, moved that "it was derogatory to the honour of the House of "Lords that any person labouring under so heavy a "sentence of a court-martial, and the consequent "public orders, should be recommended to the Crown "as worthy the dignity of peerage." The Lord-Chancellor declared this motion irregular, disorderly, and incompatible with parliamentary form; and Lord Denbigh objected to it as unprecedented. When

* 205 to 183.

the court-martial thus improperly alluded to was held, a particular complexion of politics prevailed in the cabinet; but, only four years afterward, the Rockingham administration, most of the members of which were now in opposition, had desired the restoration of Lord George Germaine to his seat in the Privy-Council; a proof that they considered his advice of importance to the State. Conceiving the motion derogatory to the prerogative of the Crown, and altogether unnecessary, he moved to adjourn. Several intemperate speeches were made, reflecting on the conduct of Lord George, and threatening him with impeachment; the right of the House to interfere was maintained by Lord Shelburne; but the motion of adjournment was carried*.

When Lord Sackville took his seat, the debate was renewed, on a motion by the Marquis of Carmarthen in nearly the same words as the former, and reciting, at length, the sentence of the court-martial, and the consequent public orders. The Marquis considered these sufficiently notorious to render specific proofs unnecessary. Lord Abingdon supported the motion in a speech replete with ribaldry, declaring that the new peer was foisted in upon the House, in defiance of common sense and common decency, in contempt of public virtue, and encouragement of every private vice. 18th February.

Lord Sackville declared he knew not to whose advice he was indebted for his peerage; but as the sentence of a court-martial did not amount to a disqualification, he was authorized to accept it. The court-martial, he proceeded, sat three-and-twenty years ago, when the prevalence of faction and clamour made him the victim of unexampled persecution. He had been condemned unheard, and punished before trial. Although stripped of all his military honours and emoluments on mere rumour, on the malicious suggestions of his enemies, who were believed without proof, he had challenged his accusers, he had provoked inquiry, and, in the pride of conscious innocence, perse-

* 75 to 28.

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vered in demanding a trial. Clamour and prejudice had been assiduously encouraged during the sitting of the court-martial; but it would not become him to revise its proceedings, and he had submitted to the sentence. He did not, however, object to a review of the transaction; on the contrary, he would risk his honour and life on the decision of the House, or even of the Marquis himself, as a man of honour. At present, neither the charge, the defence, nor the evidence was before the House, and yet they were called on to enforce the sentence a second time. Such a proceeding would add tenfold severity to the military law, by annexing to its judgments the censure of a civil court. But it was still more incompatible with justice to combine with the sentence of the court-martial, the comment added by the executive power. The court-martial was competent to pronounce, and by that he had been tried; nor was he answerable for the terms in which George II had descanted on the sentence.

Lord Southampton, who was one of the witnesses on the trial, declared he was not actuated by faction; and the Duke of Richmond, who was at the battle of Minden, though not examined as a witness on the court-martial, asserted that the time lost by Lord George Germaine was an hour and a half, a fact he was particularly able to ascertain, "as he had his "watch in his hand the whole time."

Lord Sackville was defended by Lord Walsingham and Lord Stormont; and the Lord Chancellor declared that, whoever had advised the late King to issue the orders mentioned in the motion, advised him to act most unjustly, and to fix a stigma on the noble Lord more severe than could be collected from the sentence, or even from the charge against him. The proposition being negatived by a large majority*, a protest was subscribed by nine peers†, stating the motion, sentence, and public orders, and declaring

* 93 to 28.

† They were, the Marquis of Carmarthen, the Duke of Rutland, the Earls of Pembroke, Craven, Chatham, Derby, and Egremont, the Duke of Devonshire, and Earl of Abingdon.

that the elevation of Lord Sackville was a measure fatal to the interests and glory of the Crown, and dignity of Parliament; an insult on the memory of the late Sovereign, and every surviving branch of the illustrious House of Brunswick.

The hope of mortifying the new peer by this indecent protest seems to have been the chief object of the motion. Nothing but the extreme vindictiveness of party rage could have impelled the avowed advocates of liberty to the adoption of arguments favouring the unjust and slavish doctrine, that the opinion of a King on the judgment of a military court was of sufficient authority to bind his successors, and influence the proceedings of the legislature twenty years after his disease.

19th Feb. Censures of General Arnold.

As another individual favoured by government, General Arnold was exposed to severe censures. On the commitment of the mutiny bill, Mr. Burke expressed strong disapprobation at employing that officer in the British army, as he was a rebel to rebels. His services might be properly rewarded by a pecuniary gift or pension; but he ought never to be entrusted with the power of committing fresh treasons.

Renewed motion respecting the navy.

These personal attacks were preparatory to a grand general system of assault, projected by opposition, conducted with perseverance and ability, and finally crowned with success. Mr. Fox renewed, in the House, the motion he had lost in the committee, respecting the mismanagement of the navy, declaring his effort was not personally directed against Lord Sandwich, but against the whole admiralty board. The motion was seconded by Mr. Pitt; the number of the members present was considerably greater than on the former day, and the division still less gratifying to administration, as the majority was only nineteen*.

General Conway's motion against the war.

22nd.

While the members were in the lobby on this division, Mr. Thomas Townshend gave notice that a question respecting the continuance of the American war would be speedily agitated. Accordingly, on the next sitting of the House, General Conway moved an ad-

* 236 to 217.

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dress, imploring the King to consider the calamities and heavy burdens occasioned by the war, and listen to the humble prayer and advice of the Commons, that it might no longer be pursued on the continent of North America, for the impracticable purpose of reducing the inhabitants by force, and promising to assist in forwarding and rendering effectual a happy reconciliation with the revolted colonies. In the present moment, the General observed, when there were certain indications of a design to continue the war, he thought it necessary to inquire of the new Secretary of State, who, although not a young man, was a young minister, what were his principles and sentiments respecting the American war? The King in his speech had expressed a desire for peace; and, it was said by persons of good authority, that America was in the same disposition: the House ought to give effect to such desires; for the man who did not wish for peace, not only was destitute of a heart, but did not possess a soul. Lord John Cavendish seconded the motion, with strong censures on the war, and a solemn appeal to the feelings of the House.

Mr. Welbore Ellis, without hesitation, answered the call of General Conway, and presented what he termed his profession of faith. He had always been firmly of opinion, nor could events change it, that the war was just in its origin; but he never entertained a notion that obedience could be procured by force. His idea was, that in America there were many friends to the British government; and that, by strongly supporting them, the party or faction might be destroyed, which from motives of ambition, or hatred of monarchy, wished for war. That our friends were still numerous, was a fact for which he would not pledge himself to the House; but he firmly, and for the best reasons, believed it. No man could be more sincerely desirous of peace; he could endure war only as the means of making that more happy, stable, safe, and permanent. If a test was required of the views of ministry in continuing the war, it would be best afforded by the estimates, which made no allowance for recruiting the

army. But he could never consider it the best way of procuring peace, to withdraw the troops from the enemy's country, and rid him of those alarms by which men are rendered solicitous for the return of tranquillity. Such conduct would be equivalent to a declaration of despair, an offer of a carte blanche; but to make the Americans feel the incoveniences, hardships, and burdens of war, was the most certain way to inspire a wish for its cessation. He exposed the absurdity of using so vague a term as *American war;* the whole continental army was fed, clothed, and paid by France. Mere locality did not give a name to a war; and this might therefore be considered a French war. If France was fought during the last war in Germany, why not now in America? The motion seemed to imply that the British troops should be withdrawn: if the House considered the times ripe for such a declaration, they must make it; but the present motion was replete with ambiguity. Ministers could never act with effect, either in war or peace, unless they possessed the confidence of Parliament; if they could not gain that confidence, they ought to retire; but, till that measure became necessary, they ought to be left to the free exercise of their discretion, to avail themselves of all contingencies, and not crippled by orders, which the interest of the public might compel them to disobey.

Mr. Burke ridiculed this "confession of faith," comparing it with other confessions of the same nature, intelligible only to those who were gifted with an internal light. A confession more obscure, confused, intricate, and absurd, was perhaps never framed and published for the delusion and calamity of mankind; like other unintelligible confessions, it could be supported only by miracles. The only new idea was, that locality signified nothing in war; and thus a peerage was bestowed on one who had dismembered his country, merely that an American might be converted into a French war. Mr. Burke expatiated on the delusion of this argument, and the ruinous consequences of opposing the arms of France on the continent of America, where our expenses were to her's in the propor-

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tion of twenty to one. The new plan of Mr. Ellis was, in fact, no other than the old system of his predecessor. The late secretary, though called by patent to the upper House, was still to be found in effigy in his old seat. The new minister was his universal legatee, who inherited, on Lord Sackville's political death, all his plans, projects, and measures, nay, his ideas, language, and words. He had succeeded to his hopes, his intelligence, his knowledge of our numerous friends in America, and his ignorance of every thing tending to peace. Mr. Burke exposed, from experience at Saratoga and York Town, the folly of relying on American friends; and the absurdity was heightened by considering the manner in which they were abandoned by the last capitulation; nor was he less severe on the requisition of confidence by men still determined to persevere in this mad and impolitic war. He concluded by declaring that no contingencies favourable to Great Britain could arise till a change was made in the system.

Several other members spoke on the question with great ability, principally dilating the arguments already used: the division afforded to ministry the melancholy majority of a single vote*.

Anticipating a complete triumph, and conceiving that financial arrangements alone could delay the accession of opposition to office, Mr. Fox, immediately after the division, censured Lord North's delay in opening the budget, and was informed the business was fixed for the twenty-fifth.

Altercation between Lord North and Colonel Barré.

Colonel Barré expressed surprise that Lord North could behave in so scandalous and indecent a manner; after having, by every oppression, scourged the people to the last drop of blood, he wished to scourge from them that also. His conduct was scandalous, indecent, and insulting; he had attained such a pitch, that he seemed to think the House met for no other purpose than that of granting taxes.

Lord North, unusually incensed at this unprovoked

* 194 to 193.

and unexpected attack, replied with greath warmth; he supposed the large minority of that evening had inflamed the Colonel's courage to such an intemperance of abuse; his language towards him had always been far from decent, but now it was insolent and brutal. The clamour of the House obliged the Speaker to interfere, and the minister, recovering his wonted good humour, made handsome apologies, both to the House and the individual offended. Colonel Barré, equally sensible of his own intemperance, also apologized. He differed with the noble Lord, he said, in politics, and contemned him as a minister; but, as a private gentleman, sincerely esteemed him. In that character, he should be less disposed to offer uncivil language to him than to any man living. Such were the effects of intemperate party-rage.

25th Feb. and 6th March. Debates on the new taxes.

Although the members of opposition were anxious that the minister should complete the unpopular task of taxation before he was compelled to abdicate, yet they omitted no endeavour to render his exertions unpopular, and to censure the manner, no less than the occasion, of imposing burthens on the public. Mr. Fox, decrying the terms of the loan, and accusing the minister of making corrupt bargains, for the purpose of affording douceurs to contractors, placemen, and members of Parliament, observed, that as he had brought the nation to the eve of a bankruptcy, it was of small importance for what particular sum the insolvency should be declared. Mr. Burke, animadverting on the difficulty of proposing taxes, observed, with his accustomed felicity of satire, that, on looking over the blessed fruits of Lord North's administration, he found the country loaded with ten new taxes: beer, wine, soap, leather, horses, coaches, post-chaises, post-horses, stamps, and servants; recollecting that he had omitted sugar in this enumeration, he observed, that since St. Christopher's was lost, and Barbadoes and Jamaica must probably follow, the omission was of small importance, as we should soon have no sugar to tax. "What fresh burthen," he proceeded, "can the noble "Lord add to this unhappy nation? We are taxed in

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" riding and in walking, in staying at home and in " going abroad, in being masters or in being servants, " in drinking wine or in drinking beer; in short, in " every way possible." But, viewing the account in a mercantile form, he must acknowledge that, for a hundred millions of money, we had purchased a full equivalent in disaster. If we were debtor, by loss, in that sum of money, we were also creditor, by loss, in a hundred thousand men, thirteen continental provinces, besides St. Vincent's, Grenada, Dominica, Tobago, St. Christopher's, Senegal, Pensacola, and Minorca; worth, at a moderate computation, four millions and a half annually.

27th Feb. General Conway's second motion.

Five days after his first triumphant failure, General Conway again appealed to the House on the subject of the war, by moving, " that the further prosecution of " offensive hostilities, for the purpose of reducing the " revolted colonies to obedience by force, would weaken " the efforts of Great Britain against her European " enemies, increase the mutual enmity so fatal both to " Great Britain and America, and, by preventing a " happy reconciliation with that country, frustrate the " desire expressed by his Majesty of restoring the bles- " sings of peace and tranquillity." The General's introductory speech was chiefly composed of answers to the arguments against his former motion. He deprecated every mode of warfare hitherto carried on, and wished only for a war of posts, excluding all exertion, except for self-defence, illustrating his opinion by the sorties of General Elliot from Gibraltar, and General Murray from Fort St. Philip. In this debate, several of the country gentlemen, and some official adherents, declared their resolution to divide against the Minister; and the opposition, confident of a majority, were already clamorous for the question; when Lord North, with some difficulty, obtained a hearing.

Lord North.

If the object of the motion was peace, he observed, the votes on the question would be unanimous; the wish of peace was nearest to his heart; but he was convinced the means hitherto suggested were more likely to retard than accelerate the event. No one

had ventured to intimate that the troops should be withdrawn; such a proposition would be generally condemned; and Ministers had already declared they did not intend to replace the captured army. If, however, the House remained unsatisfied with this pledge, and suspected the sincerity, ability, or integrity of Ministers, those sentiments were not to be expressed by the present motion; an address for their removal would be the only proper measure. A minister ought to be like Cæsar's wife; not only exempt from guilt, but above suspicion. If the confidence of Parliament was withdrawn, it would be his duty to resign the seal of office into the hands of his Sovereign, and retire. He then explained, with great ability, the impediments to peace while the connexion between France and America still subsisted. Even the proposition of a truce was replete with difficulty; the existing acts of parliament, the necessity of legislative interference, the confiscation of American property; all these were points requiring the greatest delicacy. He admitted the motion to be constitutional, but recommended a short delay, to convince the House that Ministers were sincere in their intention not to recruit the army in America.

Mr. Wallace, the Attorney-General, proceeded on the same principles, declaring his intention to bring in a bill enabling Ministers to treat on the basis of a truce, and moved an adjournment of the debate.

This attempt was combated by several leaders of opposition: Mr. Pitt was particularly severe on the motion of adjournment, and, on the ground of Lord North's own declaration, urged the House, by every consideration of duty or prudence, to withdraw confidence from the present administration. "Was there "a promise," he asked, "which they had not falsified? "Was there a plan in which they agreed? Did any "two of them accord in any specific doctrine? No! "there was an incessant variation: a shuffling and "tricking pervaded their whole conduct, and in them "Parliament could place no trust."

The division, on the motion of adjournment, left The Minister

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1782. in a minority. 4th March. Second address.

the Minister in a minority of nineteen*, and the original question was carried without a division. The King having returned an answer conformable to the terms of this address, General Conway, after echoing back the very words in a motion of thanks, made an experiment on the disposition of Ministers to resign, by moving, "that the House would consider as ene-"mies to the King and country, all who should advise, "or by any means attempt the further prosecution of "offensive war, for the purpose of reducing the re-"volted colonies by force."

Lord North disappointed the hopes of opposition, by declaring, that in pursuance of the address, and of the King's answer, he should use every effort to fulfil their orders, relying on their further instruction, if he appeared to misapprehend their intentions. He considered the motion unnecessary, as it only reinforced declarations already sufficiently strong.

Mr. Fox rose in great indignation, to expose the impracticability of a cabinet conforming to the instructions of Parliament, if contrary to their own judgment. He thanked God the late resolutions of the House had broken, destroyed, and annihilated that corruption which formed the basis of the present system, a system which must now soon crumble to pieces. Ministers surely could not be so profligate as to proceed after the late intelligence, that Minorca was captured; and that, by the loss of St. Christopher's, Jamaica was become our only remaining West India possession. Where did they mean to stop? When would they confess they had done enough? From his soul he believed such was their accursed obstinacy, that even when they had lost nine-tenths of the King's dominions, they would not be satisfied till they had mangled and destroyed the last miserable tenth also.

Ministers not venturing to divide the House, the motion was agreed to.

The Attorney- The efforts of both parties were now visibly directed

* 234 to 215.

1782. General's bill, for peace. 5th March.

only to the acquisition or retention of official situation. The Attorney-General submitted to a committee of the whole House his proposition for a peace or truce with America, explaining the difficulties, and suggesting means of removing them. Mr. Fox declared the motion deserving only of contempt; Ministers had no wish for peace; nothing but flagellation and correction could drive them to entertain a thought on the subject. If they were sincere, what made them reject the proffered mediation of Spain; what made them reject the mediation offered in the course of the preceding year? He would even inform them, that there were persons in Europe fully empowered to make peace between Great Britain and America, but who would not negotiate with such an administration. Our affairs were so circumstanced that they must lose their places, or their country be undone. He, as a friend to his country, would, if properly authorized, conduct the transaction, even as an under *commis* or messenger; but he desired it to be understood, that he did not mean to connect himself with any of the Ministers; "*from the moment when he should make any terms with* "*one of them, he would rest satisfied to be called the most* "*infamous of mankind: he could not for an instant* "*think of a coalition with men, who in every public and* "*private transaction, as Ministers, had shewn themselves* "*void of every principle of honour and honesty: in the* "*hands of such men he would not trust his honour, even* "*for a minute**."

Lord North explained the manner in which mediations had been offered, and answered Mr. Fox's insinuations against his honour with becoming disdain. He would not, he added, relinquish his office merely because so much eagerness was shewn to expel him; but, as he had hitherto retained it to prevent confusion and the introduction of unconstitutional principles into government, he would not resign but when commanded by the King, or when the House

* Subsequent events rendered these expressions peculiarly memorable.

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should, in the clearest manner, indicate the propriety of his withdrawing.

Mr. Fox, in handsome terms, explained the expressions he had applied to Lord North as not designed to affect his private character, or the parts of his public conduct, relating to pecuniary affairs, which were free from every imputation. He then ridiculed the resolution to remain in office, and was surprised that the few days which had elapsed since he declared his willingness to resign whenever the confidence of Parliament was withdrawn, should produce such a change in his sentiments. The Attorney-General's motion was agreed to without a division.

8th March. Lord John Cavendish's motion against the Ministry.

The next effort to bring this anxious contest to a conclusion was made by Lord John Cavendish, who moved a series of resolutions declaratory of the duration, losses, and expenses of the war, in which Great Britain was engaged without an ally, and imputing all those misfortunes to the want of foresight and ability in Ministers. A long debate produced no novelty of argument or assertion; but its termination was contrary to the hopes of opposition, as the Minister had a majority of ten*.

15th. Sir John Rous's motion.

After the lapse of a week, Sir John Rous renewed the attack on administration, by moving a resolution, "That, considering the expense, the loss of thirteen "colonies, and other losses incurred by the war, the "House could no longer repose confidence in the pre-"sent Ministers." Lord North was, on this occasion, strenuously supported, not only by his usual defenders, but by several country gentlemen. His abilities, integrity, and incorruption, were acknowledged on all sides; and if the American war could be justly considered as the cause of all public calamities, neither the origin nor the ill success of that war, it was said, could fairly be attributed to him. Could Parliament forget the stamp act, and the declaratory act, not less offensive to the Americans? Had not the whole nation

* The division was on a motion for the order of the day—Ayes 226, Noes 216.

maintained the right of sovereignty over America; and all that was great in England sanctified the idea with their suffrage and authority? Had not Lord Chatham himself declared, that if America should manufacture a stocking, or so much as forge a hob-nail, he would let fall on her the whole weight of British power? Thus had the principle of the war been held by Mr. Grenville in the stamp act, the Marquis of Rockingham in the declaratory act, and by Lord Chatham in his speech on the latter subject. The great cause of ill success was the countenance given in that House to American rebellion: General Washington's army had been called by opposition *our* army; the cause of the Americans, the cause of liberty; and they had been encouraged to persevere, under confidence that they had in the British senate a strong favouring party. Encomiums had been lavished on Dr. Franklin and Mr. Laurens; some members would prefer a prison graced with their society, to freedom in company with those who supported the cause of England*. If the present ministers should retire, could any man venture to surmise what new system would be introduced? Were their probable successors so thoroughly united among themselves as to form any system of government? One was desirous of septennial, another of triennial, and a third of annual parliaments. One member of the upper House recommended a diminution of influence without infringing on the dignity, splendour, or prerogative of the Crown; while another of equal character was for abrogating influence, even at the expense of prerogative. Lord North, it was observed, whether he retired, or was expelled from office, would exhibit to the nation the phenomenon of an ex-minister lending support to government, and not endeavouring to thwart, puzzle, and perplex public measures.

Sir James Marriott contested the assertion that we had lost thirteen colonies; they were not yet, but

* Alluding to an expression of Burke, in the debate on the treatment of Laurens.

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soon might be, lost by eagerness and precipitation. Too much forwardness to embrace peace would only further remove it from our grasp. The wisdom of private life was applicable to public concerns, and surely a good bargain or advantageous purchase was never expected to result from the display of intemperate solicitude. He vindicated the characters of administration, repeating, on his own knowledge, the observation of the Earl of Bristol, two days before his death*, that if any but a professional man was fit to preside at the Admiralty, it was Lord Sandwich. Sir James, it is said, subjected himself to considerable ridicule by a technical proof of the justice of the war, implying that, if representation was necessary to give the right of taxation, the thirteen provinces were represented by the members for the county of Kent, since in their charters they were declared to be part and parcel of the manor of Greenwich.

Lord North, in a most able speech, defended his own character and administration. He did not object to the present motion so much as to that of the preceding week; it was divested of anger, its terms moderate, and its intent clear and defined. He sincerely wished for peace, and for such an administration as could act with unanimity and effect for the national good. He would be no obstacle to a coalition of parties, for the formation and adjustment of a new cabinet in which he should have no place.

This idea was strenuously enforced by Mr. Dundas, and warmly reprobated by Mr. Pitt, who defined a coalition to be a collection and combination of all the abilities, integrity, and judgment of several parties, and turning the united exertion to the service and salvation of the country. The administration had been one of influence and intrigue; he thanked God it was likely to terminate, but trusted the House would not contaminate its own purpose by suffering the present ministers to manage the nomination of their suc-

* It is to be remembered that the Earl of Bristol was one of Lord Sandwich's greatest opponents. He died in December, 1779.

cessors. It was the prerogative of the Crown to appoint ministers; neither did it become the House to settle who were to hold places, or adjust and investigate the measure to be pursued.

The motion was rejected by a majority of nine*.

Lord North declares a change of ministry. 19th March.

Mr. Fox gave notice to his party that a new proposition to the same effect would be speedily made; and, on the appointed day, an unusual number of members and a great crowd of auditors attended. Lord Surrey presented himself to make a motion, which Lord North, after some clamour, was permitted to anticipate, by declaring "that his Majesty's ministers were no more." After some further discussion, occasioned by a profession of doubting Lord North's assertion, he obtained leave to move an adjournment for five days, when Lord Surrey might, if he deemed it necessary, proceed with his motion.

His farewell speech.

He then made his valedictory address as minister, thanking the House for the kind, the repeated, the essential support he had so long received from the Commons of England, while holding a situation to which he had at all times confessed himself unequal. To that House he owed whatever he had been; his conduct within those walls having recommended him to his sovereign. He thanked them for their partiality on all, their forbearance on many occasions. The mortifications he had lately experienced in the House could not make him forget their general support through a service of many years continuance; the recollection of which he should ever cherish as the principal honour of his life. After dwelling some time on these and similar topics, he said whatever might be the extent of the motion intended by Lord Surrey, no evil could arise from a short delay. He was conscious of his responsibility for the trust which he had so long retained, and should neither endeavour to shelter himself, nor avoid enquiry.

The exultation expressed by the opponents of the late administration, called forth the animadversions of

* 236 to 227.

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Mr. Burke, who employed his eloquence in recommending a more temperate conduct, exhorting his associates to guard against their desires, their self-opinions, their vanity, their avarice, their lust of power, and all the worst passions which disfigure the human mind, and pointing out the vast expectations which their own declarations had entitled the public to form, and the immense difficulties they had bound themselves to surmount.

Many of the former supporters of Lord North shewed, as might be expected, at least coldness toward him in his altered fortune; yet many bore honourable testimony to his merits, and vindicated their past conduct by honest and unsuspected professions of permanent esteem. Sir John Hussey Delaval paid a manly tribute of this kind; and Mr. Courtenay, though frequently interrupted by turbulent clamours, pronounced an enconium on Lord North, mixed with severe sarcasms against the triumphant party. He had always supported the late minister, he said, from a persuasion of the rectitude of his intentions, and on that point his conviction had never been shaken. If, from untoward circumstances, some of his measures had not been crowned with success, his whole conduct had displayed a sincere anxiety for the prosperity of the country. His amiable and engaging disposition had procured him many friends, his unrivalled wit many admirers; his unassuming manners (though he had held so lofty a situation for twelve years) had prevented his having any enemies; his forbearing temper was seldom irritated; and when he was provoked, his manly warmth did honour to his feelings. "These "panegyrics," he said, "cannot be censured as ill-"timed at this moment,

> "When interest calls off all her sneaking train,
> "When all the oblig'd desert, and yet complain."

"On this occasion he could freely pardon the exul-"tation, triumph, and interruption of the conquering "party; but he could not form a more sanguine wish "for the happiness of the country, than that in this day

"of difficulty, calamity and distress, an administration "might be formed as able, disinterested, and upright, "but more fortunate, than that of Lord North."

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In this active contest the lords had yet taken no share: the Earl of Shelburne had obtained a summons of the House on an intended motion for the removal of ministers; but, before the appointed day, the cabinet had surrendered. On his apology for not presenting the intended proposition, nothing remarkable occurred, but a manly speech from Lord Stormont, who, in Lord North's name as well as his own, defied crimination and courted inquiry. He made an ardent eulogy on Lord North, whose character, he said, had conquered even envy: to the most splendid talents he added an incessant zeal for the public good and the glory of his sovereign; the most perfect disinterestedness, and an integrity which even slander had not dared to tarnish.

22d Mar. Lord Shelburne's intended motion.

Such was the close of the first permanent administration formed during the reign of George III. From the prime minister the acts of government took their character; and, in speaking of him, his most inveterate opponents never accused his warmest friends of exaggeration. Of his character and attainments when he was raised to the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer, mention has already been made, and what would remain for history to record has been in a great degree anticipated. His eloquence was less distinguished by splendour of diction, than by suavity, perspicuity, and arrangement. The impression of his harangues was aided by an extraordinary degree of candour, and ingenuous confidence, which were known to be unassumed, and convinced the hearers of the purity of his motives, when they did not assent to the propriety of his measures. His temper was seldom ruffled; and although reiterated attacks sometimes extorted a sarcastic sally, and in one recent instance a severe, but merited reprehension, his wit, of which he possessed an uncommon fecundity, never left on the minds, even of those whom he overwhelmed with ridicule, a sentiment of rancour. His honour was unblemished, his integrity unquestionable;

Character of Lord North.

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and "in a long and stormy, and, at length, an unfortunate administration, he had many political opponents, almost without a personal enemy*." These estimable qualities were supposed to be in some degree counteracted by too great a facility in adopting the suggestions of others; the absence of that strictness or severity which is often necessary to enforce and ensure exertion, gave the appearance of procrastination; and a consequent want of energy seemed to pervade the other departments of administration. The absence of all selfishness in his character was proved by his having never derived pecuniary benefit from the situations he held, or the patronage he commanded; he declared with truth, in one of the debates, that he came into office a poor man, and should leave it still more poor. The King, who felt a warm regard for the personal character of the minister, and, on his retreat, expressed himself in terms of affection toward him, sensible that, by continuing unwillingly in office, he had increased his pecuniary embarrassments, generously alleviated the difficulties he had unintentionally occasioned, by a spontaneous donation from his own purse of thirty thousand pounds†.

* Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, vol. vii. 8vo. Preface.
† From private information.

CHAPTER THE FORTY-FIFTH.

1781—1782.

View of the new ministry—measures they had resolved to execute before they came into office.—Affairs of Ireland.—Meeting of delegates of volunteers.—Recall of Lord Carlisle.—The Duke of Portland Lord Lieutenant.—Motion of Mr. Eden in the British Parliament.—King's message.—Declaration of rights voted by the Irish Parliament.—Mr. Grattan's celebrated speech.—Consequent proceedings in England.—Efforts for limiting influence.—Contractors' bill.—Revenue officers' bill.—Resolutions respecting the Middlesex election rescinded.—Disfranchisement of Cricklade.—Bill compelling the holders of patent offices to reside.—Exertions of clubs and public bodies for a reform of Parliament.—Mr. Pitt's motion.—Exertions respecting economy.—King's message.—Burke's bill passes in an altered state.—Arrears of the civil list discharged.—Efforts at pacification.—Mr. Grenville sent to Paris.—Death of the Marquis of Rockingham.—Change of the ministry.—Prorogation of Parliament.—King's speech.—Shelburne administration.

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View of the new ministry.

THE new cabinet was thus composed: the Marquis of Rockingham (from whom it was called the Rockingham administration), first Lord of the Treasury; Lord John Cavendish, Chancellor of the Exchequer; Admiral Keppel, now raised to the dignity of Viscount, first Lord of the Admiralty; the Duke of Grafton, Lord Privy Seal; Earl Camden, President of the Council; the Duke of Richmond, Master-General of the Ordnance, and a knight of the garter; the Earl of Shelburne and Mr. Fox, joint Secretaries of State; General Conway, Commander-in-Chief; and

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Mr. Dunning, created Lord Ashburton, Chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster. The only member of the late administration who retained a seat in the cabinet, was the Lord Chancellor, Thurlow, whose elevation had proceeded from the express recommendation of the King.

Several other departments were filled by persons of eminent rank and talent; among the most conspicuous of whom were the Duke of Portland, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland; Mr. Burke, paymaster-general of the forces, and a privy councillor; Mr. Thomas Townshend, Secretary at War; Colonel Barré, Treasurer of the Navy; Mr. Sheridan, under Secretary of State; Sir William Howe, Lieutenant-General of the Ordnance; his brother, created a viscount, was appointed to command the grand fleet; the honourable Thomas Pelham was Surveyor-General of the Ordnance; the Duke of Manchester, Lord Chamberlain; and the Earl of Effingham, Treasurer of the Household. Mr. Kenyon was Attorney, Mr. John Lee Solicitor-General; and Sir Fletcher Norton soon afterward obtained a peerage, by the title of Lord Grantly.

Their opinions and talents.

This administration comprised sufficient integrity and talent to justify the ardent hopes of the public; but, from the heterogeneous nature of the materials, many perceived that the edifice could not be durable. The strange combination of parties had been described in the House of Commons by an expressive metaphor, "a rope of sand*;" and, even in the moment of their triumph over Lord North, their discordances of opinion produced, in two instances, smart animadversions and explanatory declarations†.

Mr. Fox, although not nominally the head, was generally regarded as the principal person in administration; his talents and his popularity placed him at such a distance from his associates, that, had his disposition been infected with the slightest taint of arrogance, he might have maintained, by the force of pub-

* See Debates, 6th March, 1782.
† See Debates, 4th and 20th March, 1782.

lic opinion, an uncontrolled sovereignty in the cabinet; but, although he was superior to the little arts of exclusion, his impetuosity in enforcing, and inflexibility in maintaining, his opinions were frequent subjects of complaint. Some members of administration were personally odious to each other. Lord Thurlow, by a long course of contest in both Houses, had attracted peculiar dislike; and from his manly, unbending temper, the ministry expected impediment rather than support. Perhaps he was only suffered to retain his place from the difficulty of adjusting the rival claims of the jurisprudential members of the new ministry. Mr. Fox, some time before the overthrow of the late cabinet, acknowledged that his adherents detested Lord Thurlow's sentiments on the constitution; but added, they did not mean to proscribe him*. Of Lord Shelburne, Mr. Fox professed not to entertain a better opinion; while speaking in terms of affectionate veneration of Lord Rockingham, he described Lord Shelburne's character as the exact reverse, and declared that his repugnance to an association in office with him and Lord Thurlow was only overcome by the satisfactory pledge for the integrity of administration, afforded by the ascendancy of the Marquis. An instance of the mutual jealousy and dislike of the two parties in administration was shewn in the late elevation of individuals. It is the province of the prime minister to "take the King's pleasure" with respect to the creation of peers; but Mr. Dunning received that honour on the advice of Lord Shelburne, without the knowledge of Lord Rockingham; but as soon as the fact was disclosed to the Marquis, he deemed it necessary to elevate another lawyer to the House of Peers, and obtained the honour for Sir Fletcher Norton†.

Measures they had concerted.

The particular measures in which the administration agreed, before their accession to power, were stated by two of the principal members to be:—first, an offer to America of unconditional independence, as the basis

* 8th March.
† From private information.

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of a negotiation for peace; secondly, the establishment of economy, by means of Mr. Burke's bill; and thirdly, the annihilation of influence over either branch of the legislature*.

Affairs of Ireland.

Before either of these measures could be brought forward, ministers were compelled, by imperious circumstances, to adopt and mature a fourth, "that of "securing the freedom of Ireland, in the most unequi- "vocal and decisive manner†." The weakness of the British government in Ireland and strength of the assertors of their independence on the British parliament, inspired the party, called patriots, with ardent hopes of obtaining important concessions. Their views were favoured and their arguments strengthened by the striking fact, that, in no less than five statutes which had lately passed the English parliament, Ireland was expressly mentioned. If it had been argued that the claim of right alone was not worth a contest, this practical exertion of it furnished an irresistible answer. County and other popular meetings were held, addresses voted, and instructions given to members for asserting the independence of the Irish legislature, extinguishing the powers reserved to the privy-council under Poyning's law, procuring a habeas corpus act, establishing the independence of judges, abolishing sinecure places, inquiring into the expenditure of the public money, securing the freedom of trade, and revising the act for equalizing duties; and, as the best means of obtaining these ends, the members were instructed not to concur in granting supplies for a longer period than six months.

Volunteers.

The volunteer associations lent a powerful aid to these movements, being encouraged in proportion as they displayed a disposition to co-operate in them.

1781. 9th October. Transactions in the Irish Parliament.

The inability of government to afford the succours which had been required for the north of Ireland caused the formation of those bands; their extension was aided by novelty and the love of display, and by

* See the speeches of the Duke of Richmond and General Conway; Debates, 9th and 10th of July, 1782.

† General Conway's speech, 10th of July.

those who sagaciously foresaw how much political influence would be the result. Soon they began to acquire discipline and confidence, formed themselves into regiments and brigades, procured cannon and field equipages, and formed companies of artillery. They accepted no pay, clothed themselves in uniforms of various colours, elected their own officers, and sometimes cashiered them for misconduct; and, when sufficient arms could no longer be obtained by purchase or exportation, government, reluctantly perhaps, supplied the deficiency; and the exchanged prisoners or invalids who returned from America were effectually courted to afford instruction. The original cause of this association, the fear of invasion, had disappeared, or was merged in considerations of higher political importance: the separate bodies corresponded with each other, and formed such an union as gave them not merely weight, but preponderance in the kingdom. The volunteers of the metropolis gave themselves stability and importance by selecting the Duke of Leinster for their general and commander. Other district generals were appointed; four provincial armies were organized, and the general command of the Leinster army was accepted by Lord Charlemont, a nobleman whose temper, moderation, and prudence were highly beneficial to both countries. The importance of this confidence may be judged of from the fact that there were, at this time, only five thousand regular troops in the country, while the volunteers were one hundred thousand*.

1781. Sept. 28th.

During the recess, some alterations had been effected in the government. The Earl of Carlisle had succeeded the Earl of Buckinghamshire; and, Sir Richard Heron retiring from the post of chief secretary, his station was conferred on Mr. Eden. The Lord-Lieutenant, in opening the session, said, in the course of his speech, that nothing could more contribute to the public security than the general concurrence with

* Plowden's History of Ireland, vol. i. pp. 487, 517, 563. Jonah Barrington's Historic Memoirs, vol. i. pp. 47, 111, 153 to 159. Grattan's Memoirs of Henry Grattan, vol. i. p. 180, 226.

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which the late spirited offers of assistance had been presented from every part of the kingdom, and his conviction that, if necessary, he could have called into action all the strength and spirit of a brave and loyal people, eager to be employed in aid of his Majesty's regular forces for the public defence. This acknowledgment displeased Mr. Grattan, a distinguished patriot. He adverted, with spleen, to the manner in which the loyal exertions of the Irish were commended from the throne, while the volunteers were not expressly mentioned. He wished he could reconcile royal ears to that salutary and wholesome name. No amendment on the address was moved; and, after it had been carried, thanks were unanimously voted to all the volunteers, for their exertions and continuance, and

10th October.

loyal and spirited declarations. A similar proposition was offered in the upper House, where Lord Bellamont, the only dissentient, distinguished between their services and their establishment; he honoured their zeal and admired their gallantry; he would lead them with confidence, accompany them with affection; with them he would be foremost in the breach, last on the mine; but he would not perpetuate a claim which was

13th Nov.

without legal foundation: he valued them as the purest bullion, but would not recognize them as sterling, until they received the stamp of majesty.

8th Dec.

In pursuance of the popular instructions, Mr. Grattan offered a bill to explain, amend, and limit the mutiny act. His motion was rejected, but renewed early in the ensuing month by Lord Arran, and evaded by a motion of delay for six months. Six peers joined in a protest, declaring that the measure would have been equally beneficial to Great Britain and Ireland. Several other attempts were made to effect extensive alterations in the government, and secure what was deemed the independence of Ireland. Free trade, the habeas corpus act, and Poyning's law, afforded opportunities for making motions and bringing into discussion unusual topics, to which the bad news from America, and the general state of the British Government, gave opportunity and encouragement.

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1782. 15th Feb. Meetings of the delegates of volunteers.

On the failure of these efforts, the volunteers of the province of Ulster, having previously determined to be represented by delegates, assembled at Dungannon, and assumed a deliberative character, of which they affirmed themselves not to be deprived by associating in arms. They passed resolutions adjusting many important points of government: the claim of any body of men, other than the King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland, to legislate for that kingdom; the powers exercised by the privy councils of both kingdoms, under colour of the law of Poynings; all burdens or obstructions impeding their trade with neutral countries, imposed by any other power than the Parliament of Ireland; a mutiny bill not limited in duration from session to session; and the refusal or delay of the right to secure the independence of judges, and impartial administration of justice, were declared unconstitutional, illegal, and grievances. They further announced their unalterable determination to seek redress, and pledged themselves to each other, and to their country, not to countenance any candidate at any ensuing election, who had not supported, or would not support, their resolutions. They resolved the right of private judgment in matters of religion, to be equally sacred in all; and therefore, as Irishmen, Christians, and Protestants, rejoiced in the relaxation of the penal laws against the Roman Catholics, conceiving the measure to be fraught with the happiest consequences to the union and prosperity of Ireland. They made arrangements for future meetings, appointed a committee to represent them in a general assembly of delegates of corps in Dublin, and voted an address thanking the minority of the Irish Parliament for their noble and spirited, though ineffectual, efforts in defence of the great commercial and constitutional rights of the country. "Go on," they said; "the "almost unanimous voice of the people is with you; "and, in a free country, the voice of the people must "prevail. We know our duty to our Sovereign, and "are loyal: we know ourselves, and are resolved to "be free."

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1782. Feb. and March.

Deriving new hopes from these resolutions and the spirit they indicated, Mr. Grattan moved an address to the King, declaratory of the rights of Ireland to an independent legislature, notwithstanding the power of controul assumed by the Parliament of England; but his motion was negatived, as was another for a bill to quiet the proprietors of estates in Ireland under British acts of parliament. As this measure tended also to affirm that Great Britain had no right to legislate for Ireland, Mr. Yelverton, as a middle course, or temperate expedient, procured, with the concurrence of all parties, an act for making several laws passed in Great Britain, and affecting Ireland, acts of the Irish Parliament.

Recall of Lord Carlisle.

At this period, the struggle for power in England terminated in the recall of the Earl of Carlisle, who had held the viceroyalty since December 1780. He was succeeded by the Duke of Portland. On this occasion, the Earl having been displaced, so that an address could not be presented, a resolution was moved in the House of Commons, thanking him for the wisdom and prudence of his administration, and for his uniform and unremitting attention to promote the welfare of the kingdom. Mr. Grattan, Mr. Forbes, and Mr. Flood offered some opposition; but, as they could only have obtained two votes beside themselves, they did not press the question to a division*.

8th April. Motion of Mr. Eden in the British Parliament respecting Ireland.

The Easter recess afforded ministers leisure to arrange the affairs of their departments, and procure the re-election of such as were members of the lower House. They were desirous of a little interval in which measures might be so prepared and digested as to give reasonable satisfaction to Ireland, without a too violent shock to the prejudices and pretensions of England. For this purpose, the Marquis of Rockingham and Mr. Fox wrote to Lord Charlemont, suggesting the propriety of adjourning the House of Commons in Ireland for a fortnight or three weeks, and carry on measures, which, at the time, it would appear ungenerous to extort. The proposition was suggested to

* The authorities already quoted.

Mr. Grattan, whose answer was short and decisive: "No time; no time; he and his friends could not "delay; they were pledged to the people; they could "not postpone the question, for the measures were "public property*."

On the meeting of the British Parliament, Colonel Luttrell introduced the affairs of Ireland, by stating the prevailing discontents, and the desire of ministers to remove them, and requiring from Mr. Eden an explanation of the affairs of that kingdom.

Mr. Eden readily entered on the task, describing the conduct of government and opposition for the last two years, and descanting on the valour, loyalty, and popularity of the volunteers, whose desires and sentiments were those of all Ireland. The declaration of rights, so unanimously and ardently cherished, could no longer be opposed with success: the attempt would be as vain as to make the Thames flow up Highgate hill. He did not believe the Irish would abuse the advantages they might obtain, and they would be restrained from adopting measures injurious to England, since the King, with the advice of a responsible cabinet, must sanction all their acts. Beside the declaration of rights, the volunteers, or, in another word, Ireland, had called for a habeas corpus, and obtained it; a bill for making the commissions of judges *quamdiu bene se gesserint*, demanded by them, was in its progress through Parliament; the required alteration of the mutiny act might easily be granted, and a modification of Poyning's law, which would satisfy the people, could not be dangerous to England. He then moved for leave to bring in a bill "repealing so much of the act of the "sixth of George I as asserted a right in the King "and Parliament of Great Britain to make laws bind-"ing the kingdom and people of Ireland." He did not wish to be precipitate; but the recess of the Irish Parliament would terminate in eight days, and Mr. Grattan would then renew and carry his motion for a declaration of rights. It would surely then be advise-

* Memoirs of Grattan, vol. i. p. 215 to 220.

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able to anticipate the wishes of the people, to afford them a pledge of the sincerity of England, a security for the permanency of the constitution, and of that trade they were so anxious to preserve.

Three members, all natives of Ireland, rose to second Mr. Eden's motion; but Mr. Fox declaimed with indignation against the indecent hurry of bringing forward, on the first appearance of the new ministry in parliament, before they had time to make arrangements, or digest measures more effectual and important, a little partial repeal, proposed only to acquire a little popularity. Had the late ministry displayed but a moderate share of that alertness which now so much misbecame the mover, England had not been involved in her present difficulties. Moderate concession granted to temperate requests, would have prevented those haughty claims which would wrench the kingdom of Ireland from the legislation of Great Britain; but the nation was now reduced to abject unconditional submission. He wished Mr. Eden to withdraw his motion; which was agreed to, after a debate in which many reflections were made on the harsh manner of notifying Lord Carlisle's recall, and his removal from the lord-lieutenancy of the east riding of Yorkshire, which ministers had restored to Lord Carmarthen.

9th April. King's message.

The next day, Mr. Fox snbmitted to Parliament a message from the King, expressing concern at the discontents and jealousies of Ireland, and recommending to the serious consideration of the House the means of satisfactory adjustment. In moving the address on this message, Mr. Fox declared the resolution of ministers to act effectually, and not patch up a temporary cessation of claims, leaving to their successors the dangers of an unsettled constitution. The pretensions of the Irish Parliament and people comprehended not only commercial rights and privileges, but legislative powers and royalty. The hasty step proposed by Mr. Eden would be unwise and impolitic. Time must be allowed for deliberation and the acquisition of perfect information, which ministers would faithfully submit to Parliament, hoping that the happy, speedy, and per-

manent conclusion of so important an affair, would be forwarded by all the ability, zeal, affection, and honesty of both kingdoms. The address was voted without opposition; as was a similar testimony of respect from the upper House, on the motion of Lord Shelburne.

11th April.

The speeches of both Secretaries of State were profuse in general acknowledgments toward the Irish, with a reserve of due consideration for the dignity of Great Britain. Their declarations were involved in studied mystery; but it appeared from the observations of Mr. Fox that the large concessions recommended by Mr. Eden were not intended to be made.

16th April. Declaration of rights voted by the Irish Parliament.

If any hesitation or variety of opinion existed in the British cabinet, it was abruptly terminated by the decision of the Irish House of Commons. That body was convoked by an extraordinary summons to every member, requiring him to attend, as he tendered the rights of parliament. The pretensions intended to be advanced were communicated to government, and well known to the public. At Mr. Grattan's residence, which was opposite that of the Lord-Lieutenant, crowds of anxious members assembled; carriages obstructed the avenues; the people surrounded their leader. The capital was filled with volunteers, who had arrived to attend an approaching meeting of the province of Leinster; cavalry, infantry, and artillery were posted on the quays, the bridges, and approaches to the two Houses of Parliament, while other bodies were stationed in various parts of the city, and the regular troops lined the passage for the Lord-Lieutenant. The streets were thronged, and the galleries of the House crowded at an early hour*.

Such was the general state of public feeling, such the overawing aspect of general determination, when a short message was delivered from the new Lord-Lieutenant, stating that his Majesty, being informed of the prevailing discontents and jealousies, recommended it to the House to take the matter into their serious con-

* Taken almost verbatim from the Memoirs of Henry Grattan, vol. i. p. 222, 223.

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sideration, in order to a final and satisfactory adjustment.

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In delivering this message, the Right Honourable John Hely Hutchinson pointed out several measures which he thought essential; they were, in fact, those which had been already so much agitated, and formed the resolutions at the Dungannon meeting. The claim of Ireland to be bound by no laws but those made by her own King, Lords, and Commons, he had always asserted from the seat of judicature as a judge, and in that House as a representative of the people. It was no new claim, but old as the invasion of the right, which, in 1641, the House had denominated an innovation unknown to their ancestors. Soon after the restoration, the Speaker, in an address to the Lord-Lieutenant, had so stated it; and, soon after the revolution, the questions was placed out of the reach of controversy, by the work of that great scholar and philosopher, Mr. Locke. Mr. Grattan, he said, must ever live in the hearts of his countrymen; but the present age and posterity would be indebted to him for the greatest of all obligations, and would, but he hoped at a far distant day, inscribe on his tomb, that he had redeemed the liberties of his country.

Mr. Grattan's celebrated speech.

On the motion for an address on this message, Mr. Grattan engrafted an amendment, containing a full and explicit declaration of the rights of Ireland, as claimed by the people and the delegates of the volunteers. His speech was uncommonly fervid: he remembered Ireland when she was a child, and had seen her progress from injuries to arms, from arms to liberty. The Irish were no longer afraid of the French, nor of any nation, nor of any minister. If men turned their eyes to the rest of Europe, they found the ancient spirit expired, liberty ceded, or empire lost; nations subsisting on the memory of past glory, and guarded by mercenary armies; but Ireland, quitting such examples, had become a model to them; she had excelled modern, and equalled ancient Europe. The meeting of military delegates at Dungannon was a great event, an original measure; and, like all original

measures, matter of surprise till it became matter of admiration. Magna Charta was not attained in parliament, but by barons armed in the field. Great original transactions did not flow from precedent, but contained in themselves both reason and precedent. The revolution had no precedent; the Christian religion had no precedent; the apostles had no precedent. All great constitutional questions had been lost, the public had been lost, had they depended only on parliament; but they had fallen into the hands of the people, and by the people would be preserved. The Irish volunteers were associated for the maintenance of the laws; but the claims of the British Parliament were subversive of all law. The volunteers had supported the rights of the Irish Parliament against those temporary trustees who would have relinquished them; but England had no reason to fear the Irish volunteers: they would die for England and her majestic race of men. Allied by liberty as well as allegiance, the two nations formed a constitutional confederacy; the perpetual annexation of the Crown was one great bond; but liberty was a still greater. It would be easy to find a King, but impossible for the Irish to find a nation who could communicate to them a great charter, save only England. This made England a natural connexion; and every true Irishman would exclaim—*Liberty with England—but—at all events—Liberty!**

His reward.

The motion, which comprised a repeal of the sixth of George I, including a restoration of the appellant jurisdiction of the House of Lords, an abolition of the power of the privy-council founded on Poyning's law, and a repeal of the perpetual mutiny act, was carried without a division, though not without debate. The gratitude of the nation to the popular orator was shewn by a parliamentary grant of fifty thousand pounds, for the purpose of purchasing an estate and erecting a mansion.

* See a report of this speech in the Remembrancer, vol. xiv. p. 18. Parliamentary Register of the House of Commons of Ireland, vol. i. on the days referred to.

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1782. 17th May. Consequent proceedings in the British Parliament.

Instructed by these resolves, and by the evident determination throughout the country to support them to all extremities, ministers no longer hesitated respecting the quality or mode of concession. Mr. Fox, in a committee of the whole House, expatiated on the claims of Ireland, allowing them to be founded on justice, and such as he, while out of office, had always maintained. Ireland had clearly and plainly stated her wants; he should be as plain; and, although perhaps he might have been better pleased with a different mode of asking, still he would meet her on her own terms. Whatever blame might be discovered in the course of the business, he imputed to the late administration, and concluded by moving "for an act repealing that of the sixth of George I, made for "securing the dependence of Ireland."

Mr. Thomas Pitt seconded the motion, and members of all parties concurred in applauding it; Lord Beauchamp alone expressed a doubt that the repeal, leaving the question of right undecided, would not satisfy the Irish nation. The motion passed without a division, as did two others, one for an address to the King, praying the adoption of measures for rendering the connexion between the two kingdoms solid and permanent; and another, declaring the interests of both inseparable.

17th May. The proceedings in the upper House were nearly similar, and no division arose. Lord Loughborough, however, pointed out several inconveniences which might possibly ensue from the extensive construction of the resolutions, and recommended some delay, for the sake of preparation, and to avoid that precipitancy which would seem to result from fear.

11th and 14th June. The repealing act passed both Houses in general silence. Its reception in Ireland justified, in some degree, Lord Beauchamp's anticipation: for Mr. Flood, by maintaining that the concession was insufficient, inasmuch as the principle on which the act of George I was founded, was not renounced, wrested from Mr.

27th June. Grattan, who asserted the contrary, a portion of his

popularity*. The Irish Parliament, however, shewed great satisfaction at the acquisition, and voted addresses of thanks, and a hundred thousand pounds for a levy of twenty thousand seamen for the British navy.

8th April. Efforts for limiting influence. Contractors' bill.

In prosecution of another avowed object, the limitation of influence, the popular measures presented in former sessions were revived. The bill for excluding contractors was in a committee before the expulsion of the late administration; it was now amended and recommitted, and passed the House of Commons with inconsiderable opposition. In the Lords, the principle was strenuously, and with great force of argument, opposed by the Lord Chancellor and Lord Mansfield. In the committee, Lord Ashburton successfully proposed an amendment, exempting from the operation of the bill those who made contracts for the produce of their own estates; but the House of Commons disagreed, and the bill passed in its original form.

24th and 27th May.

8th to 25th April. Revenue officers' bill.

With equal eagerness, the bill for preventing revenue officers from voting in parliamentary elections was pressed in the House. It was strenuously, though unsuccessfully, opposed in the Commons; but a rider was added, to prevent its extending to those who held places for life, as they could not be under the dominion of influence. On the third reading in the upper House, Lord Mansfield made an eloquent speech against the principle of the bill; he was answered by the Bishop of Peterborough and the Marquis of Rockingham, who declared his situation as first Lord of the Treasury would be extremely uneasy if the bill was rejected. In seventy boroughs, he said, the election depended chiefly on revenue officers. Nearly twelve thousand of these persons, created by the late administration, possessed votes in other places; and he could not, without remorse, subject them by his influence to the necessity, or at least the imputation, of voting against the dictates of gratitude and conscience. This curious argument, which implied that, unless the voters were deprived of the power of doing wrong, the minis-

3rd June.

* See reports of the debate on this subject. Remembrancer, vol. xiv. pp. 307, 319, and Irish Parliamentary Register.

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ter could not refrain from compelling them, terminated the debate, and the bill passed*.

1782. 3rd May. Resolution respecting the Middlesex election rescinded.

Another sacrifice to popularity, in the shape of reform, was the expunction from the journals of the resolution of February 1769, respecting the Middlesex election, on the motion of Mr. Wilkes. Mr. Fox opposed it, on the principle that the House of Commons ought, for the advantage of the people, to have the privilege of expelling those whom they, as representatives, thought unworthy of a seat, and the privilege was too valuable to be surrendered. In support of this doctrine, he framed an extraordinary case. "Suppose," he said, "the bill for excluding contractors "had been rejected by the House of Lords, and the "House of Commons had come to a resolution of their "own, that no person holding a contract should have "a seat; the contractors now in Parliament would be "expelled, but might be re-elected; and then, if the "inherent privilege did not impede it, those very men "whom the House had declared improper to sit, must "remain amongst them." He acknowledged himself, however, indifferent to the event of the motion, as the proceedings against the magistrates of London had demonstrated, that, whatever privileges the House might possess, they could not be exercised in opposition to the voice of the people.

Mr. Dundas, although on the same side, warmly reprobated the unconstitutional doctrines of Mr. Fox; and the motion was carried by a great majority†. Elated with this final triumph, after an annual defeat, Wilkes published a letter expressive of his *raptures*, and his resolution to persevere in the cause of freedom and parliamentary reform: but few people now participated his *raptures;* the question had ceased to be interesting, and the popularity attached to the name of Wilkes had been repeatedly transferred to others, and was in a state of daily fluctuation.

18th Feb. Early in the session, a bill was introduced for dis-

* 34 to 18. There were several divisions in the House of Commons in the proportion of 7 or 8 to 1.

† 115 to 47.

franchising the borough of Cricklade. A committee on the petition of an unsuccessful candidate, reported that great abuses had been committed; and Sir Harbord Harbord affirmed, that, out of two hundred and forty voters, eighty-three had already been convicted of bribery, and actions for the same offence were pending against forty-three others. In the House of Commons, the disfranchisement was opposed with considerable ability, but without effect. It was justified on the same principles as that of the electors of New Shoreham. "When that bill was shewn to the Earl of "Chatham," said Mr. Montagu, "he expressed his joy "at finding the borough removed from Bengal to its "ancient situation in the county of Sussex."—If the present were rejected, Crickdale would certainly be removed from Wiltshire to the East Indies.

Disfranchisement of Cricklade.

13th March.

The progress of the bill through the House of Lords was rendered remarkable by the zeal and ability with which the Lord Chancellor, Lord Mansfield, and Lord Loughborough opposed, and Lords Grantly and Ashburton supported it. The latter lords found a powerful auxiliary, or rather an able leader, in the Duke of Richmond; but his grace, in the course of debate, reproached the lord chancellor with indiscriminately resisting every measure of regulation or improvement. Lord Fortescue, enlarging on the same topic, bewailed the degraded dignity of the House, lowered and tarnished by a profusion of lawyers. It was no longer a House of Peers, but a mere court of law, where all the solid, honourable principles of truth and justice were shamefully sacrificed to the low pettifogging chicanery and quibbles used in Westminster Hall. That once venerable, dignified, and august assembly resembled a meeting of attorneys in a Cornish court, acting as barristers. The learned lord on the woolsack seemed fraught with nothing but contradictions, and law subtleties and distinctions, and all that.

3rd May.

Such remarks obtained no answer, and did not prevent the exertions of opposition; evidence was called and counsel heard against the bill; when the Duke of Richmond again gave vent to his indignation against

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what he termed the professional phalanx. Attacked by lawyers above the bar, and interrupted by lawyers below, he considered himself unequal to the contest; and therefore obtained the aid of counsel in support of the bill, which finally passed, great majorities in its favour appearing on every division*.

Bill compelling the holders of offices to reside.

A more important and beneficial law was introduced under the influence of Lord Shelburne, for compelling future holders of patent places in the colonies or plantations to reside and act in their offices.

Exertions of clubs and public bodies for a reform of Parliament.

Hitherto all the reforms supported by administration had been sanctioned by the concurrence of Parliament. One remained, on which the public felt considerably interested, from the great pains which had been employed to procure, in all popular assemblies, votes and resolutions in its favour, and to exhibit it to the people as a measure on which their freedom and prosperity depended: this was a reform in the representative system of the House of Commons.

March and April 1781.

Measures for enforcing this reform were systematically adopted in the preceding year, by the delegates of the associated or petitioning bodies, comprising pretended representatives of the counties of York, Surrey, Hertford, Huntingdon, Middlesex, Essex, Kent, Devon, and Nottingham, and the City of Westminster. They resolved, that the public evils were produced by the gross inadequacy in parliamentary representation, which the addition of a hundred county members in due proportions would tend to correct. The septennial act was declared a violation of the rights of the people, which impaired the connexion between them and their representatives, and exposed Parliament to great unconstitutional influence: and its repeal would form a strong barrier against the inroads of parliamentary corruption, and the alarming influence of the Crown. These resolves were enforced by addresses to the electors of Great Britain, urging the necessity of reform, by statements deduced from history, and arguments founded on right and policy†. The livery of London, in com-

31st Jan. 1782.

* On the commitment, 13th May, the division was 47 to 22.

† See Remembrancer, vol. xiii, p. 193.

mon-hall, resolved, that the inequality of representation, and the corrupt state of Parliament, had produced the war, the dismemberment of the empire, and all other grievances. The only adequate remedy would be found in re-establishing the constitutional share of the people in government, and in a frequent election of representatives, according to ancient usage. They also established a corresponding committee. Against this meeting, however, a protest was signed by five of the common-council.

7th May. Mr. Pitt's motion.

The cause, thus espoused by these committees and public bodies, was introduced to Parliament by Mr. Pitt. In a speech of great ability, he described the evils which had arisen, and might arise, from the unequal representation. Some boroughs were under the command, and others in the possession, of the treasury. The influence of government was contested in others; not by the electors, but by some powerful individual assuming hereditary right. Some boroughs had no actually existing property, population, or trade, nor any weight in the political balance, except in the return of members; and others, in the lofty profession of English freedom, claimed no right but that of bringing their votes to market: they had no other market, no other property, no other stake in the country than the price of their votes. Such boroughs were the most dangerous of all. They never consulted the interests of the public, but offered their representation to the best purchaser: they were properly within the jurisdiction of the Carnatic; and it was a well-known fact, that the Nabob of Arcot had, at that time, seven or eight members in the House. Foreign influence had ever been considered dangerous; and if the nabobs of India could acquire such an influence, why might not a foreign power at enmity with Great Britain acquire a similar portion by the same means. Some persons had suggested, as the best means of effecting a nearer relation between the representatives and the people, to deprive the rotten and corrupt boroughs of a part of their members, and add them to those places which had a greater stake and interest in the country. Another

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mode recommended, was shortening the duration of parliaments; but all considerations of these he should, for the present, omit, referring the task of selection to a committee freely chosen. The matter of complaint was clear; his own judgment was strengthened by the advice of some of the first characters in the kingdom, and of some on whom the grave had closed. Of one of these in particular, every member in the House could speak with more freedom than himself. That person was not apt to indulge vague and chimerical speculations, inconsistent with practice and expediency; and the opinion of that person was, that unless first principles were, in this respect, recurred to, and a more solid and equal representation of the people established, by which the proper constitutional connexion might be revived, this nation, with the greatest aptitudes for happiness and grandeur of any other on the face of the earth, must be confounded with the mass of those whose liberties were lost in the corruption of the people. He moved, and was seconded by Alderman Sawbridge, "for the appointment of a committee to "inquire into the state of representation in Parlia-"ment, and to report to the House their observations "thereon."

The first opponent of the motion was Mr. Thomas Pitt, who anticipated and deprecated the constructions to which his sentiments would be liable from those who considered him merely as proprietor and representative of Old Sarum. He objected to the time of introducing the subject, when government was already overloaded with projects of reform. Mere theorists attempted to establish the wild system, that nations could only be free where no individual was bound but by laws to which he had consented, either in person or by a representative whom he had actually nominated. History sufficiently proved that such a principle never applied to the British Constitution. Nothing like equality of representation could be found. Rutland, as a county, returned as many representatives as Devonshire or Yorkshire. At first, counties alone were represented; afterward great cities, towns, and places of

note, and even inconsiderable villages. The rule of their addition could not be defined; but most assuredly it was not that of equal representation, or uniform importance; nor was it fit, at this period, to try chartered privileges by a new rule which never did apply to them. However plausible and popular the idea of equal representation, it was of all others the most extravagant, impracticable, visionary, and absurd. If such a principle was essential to a free government, there never had been, nor ever could be, a free government.

The real origin and purpose of the Parliament, was to balance the power of the Crown. The members of the lower House, however variously elected, stood, individually, and collectively, as representatives, of all the subjects of Great Britain. If they effected the great purpose of defending the people at large against the encroaching power and increasing influence of the Crown; if, as faithful guardians, they held the public purse; if they preserved the laws of the country from violation; they answered every end of their institution, whatever irregularities a speculist might fancy he discovered in their appointment: for that country truly enjoys the benefit of civil liberty, where the law holds an equal course to all, not where all are equally represented.

"Is all influence in this House," he proceeded, "equally dangerous, equally alarming, equally subversive of the great principle I have endeavoured to "establish? What was the contest with the Crown before the establishment of the lower House? A contest not for liberty, but for power, between the King, "the barons, and the clergy. What has been the "change that since its origin has thrown weight into "the balance of this House? The aristocratical weight "of property, which, increasing in this House, has enabled it to resist the augmenting influence of the "Crown. The House of Lords can no longer be relied on as a counterpoise; the barons are no longer "the barrier against the encroachments of the Crown. "Let us take care, that, by an innovation purely democratical, and which shall remove from us that influ-

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" ence to which we owe so much of our importance, " we do not reduce ourselves again to that state, when " the greatest influence of all may crush us under " feet."

The motion, he observed, would place Parliament in a cruel dilemma; if negatived, the prejudices of the times would represent the House as partial, unprincipled, and corrupt; shutting their ears against evils fatal to public liberty, lest they should be obliged to confess the necessity of a remedy. If adopted, they must launch into a sea without a shore; a general inquiry without any defined or specific object; an inquisition into the state of every borough, which would alarm the feelings of every one interested in so extensive a consideration, while it held out to the public expectations which the House never meant to satisfy, nor ought to satisfy, nor could satisfy, were it ever so expedient. The question was not, whether any specific alteration should be adopted, but whether Parliament should open a general shop to receive all the projects of the wildest of projectors, to let loose the imagination of the public on the most delicate, yet most important of considerations. Bounds could never be set to the inquiry; the torrent could never be restrained; the principle must be carried to the utmost extent, or abandoned; representation, if an inherent or natural, was an universal right; there was no medium. To countenance so general, so undefined a measure as that on the table, would be an act of madness and infatuation, tending only to tumult and disorder, and every confusion that expectation, followed by disappointment, could operate on the passions of the multitude.

During a long debate, many conspicuous parliamentary characters delivered their sentiments; Sir George Savile, Mr. Courtenay, Mr. Fox, and Mr. Sheridan supported the measure. Its chief opponents were the honourable Mr. Yorke, Mr. Rolle, Mr. M'Donald, Mr. Rigby, and Mr. Dundas, who particularly distinguished himself by a speech replete with sound sense and accurate information, and sparkling

Rejected.

genuine wit. The question was rejected by adopting the order of the day*.

The conduct of the ministry was represented to the public as insidious and treacherous; they were accused of giving a negative, damning support to the proposition, while, by indirect means, they concurred in its failure. Against this charge, which threatened fatal consequences to their popularity, Mr. Fox, at a subsequent period, took great pains to justify himself. He professed warm, unalterable attachment to reform; but some of his colleagues, particularly Mr. Burke and Mr. Thomas Townshend, he said, viewed the proposition with disgust and antipathy. Such men he could not influence to speak or vote against their opinions; but what he could, he did; he persuaded them not to attend the discussion†.

17th May. Sawbridge's annual motion. 24th. Mahon's bill.

Alderman Sawbridge renewed his annual attempt to shorten the duration of Parliament; but his motion, though eloquently sustained by Mr. Pitt, was rejected by a large majority‡. Lord Mahon also introduced a bill for preventing bribery and expenses at elections, the regulations of which were so strict, as even to prevent the candidate from allowing a carriage to a non-resident voter. Mr. Pitt supported the bill; but it was opposed by Mr. Fox, and, the severest of its clauses being rejected, it was withdrawn.

21st June. 15th April. Exertions respecting economy. King's message

The ministerial undertaking of economical reform was introduced to Parliament by a message from the King to each House, recommending the consideration of an effectual plan of economy through all branches of the public expenditure. He had taken into consideration a form and regulation in his civil-list establishment, which he would speedily submit to Parliament for their advice and assistance. "His Majesty," the message proceeded, "has no reserves with his "people, on whose affections he rests with a sure re- "liance, as the best support of the true honour and

* 161 to 141.

† See Mr. Fox's speech at the anniversary dinner (10th October, 1782). Remembrancer, vol. xiv. p. 293.

‡ 149 to 61.

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" dignity of his crown and government; and as they " have hitherto been his best resource on every emer- " gency, so he regards them as the most solid and " stable security for an honourable provision for his " person and family."

An address of thanks was voted with unanimous assent; Mr. Burke, in moving it, congratulated the House and the kingdom on the happy era when his Majesty, freed from that secret and injurious council which stood between him and his people, now spoke to them in the pure and rich benevolence of his own heart. The message was the genuine effusion of paternal care and tenderness; it was what good subjects merited from a good king, and every man would rejoice in and bless the day, when, restored to the dignified independence of his elevated situation, the sovereign was able to participate in their sufferings, to praise and reward their fortitude. It was the best of messages, to the best of people, from the best of Kings.

Mr. Powys, in the name of the country gentlemen, declared his warm exultation in the message, and, in language formed on Mr. Burke's model, extolled it as a noble and gracious instance of royal benevolence, which would reconcile the people to their burdens.

Mr. Fox too spoke in terms of panegyric and confidence. " His Majesty," he said, " came with almost " unparalleled grace to his Parliament, and desired to " participate in the exertions and sufferings of his peo- " ple, by the reduction of his own peculiar establish- " ments, choosing and wishing to find his support in " the hearts of his subjects."

Burke's bill passes in an altered state.

But however confident might be the anticipation of ministers, the bill for retrenching the expenses of the household no longer appeared before the public with all the captivating allurements which had been lent to it, while designed by opposition for the embarrassment

6th May.

of government. In the committee, Mr. Burke proposed a saving of seventy-two thousand three hundred and sixty-eight pounds per annum; but he introduced

13th June. 14th.

his bill tardily and silently to the House. On the second reading, he was goaded into a speech, for the

purpose of defending his measure against the imputations it incurred by varying essentially from his original proposition, which taught the public to expect a golden harvest from economy, and a luxuriant vegetation of liberty from the prunings of influence. He had omitted a regulation for supplying the royal household by contract, he said, because the measure was generally unpopular. Those relative to Wales were abandoned, because they did not appear to please the people, who were induced by a faction to regard them with horror. The retrenchment in the ordnance office he had postponed, if not totally renounced, because that department was filled by a nobleman whose patriotism and frugality would supersede the necessity of restraint. The mint was not yet regulated, because the directors of the bank were unwilling to assume the execution of its duties. The offices of treasurer and cofferer of the household were suffered to remain, because their possessors carried white wands, and their abolition would appear an encroachment on the splendour and dignity of the Crown. The duchies of Lancaster and Cornwall, it appeared by a subsequent explanation, were left unreformed, because the clamours which had been raised about Wales might extend to them also. These reasons appeared so trifling, that even Colonel Barré and Mr. Powys expressed themselves not entirely satisfied, and the bill passed dully through the House, barely unopposed, but wholly uncelebrated.

The retention of appointments which had been formerly descanted on in glowing terms, as extremely onerous and injurious to the public, for no other reason than that they were held by the Duke of Richmond and Lord Ashburton, formed a stigma on the favourite measure, which was not removed by Mr. Burke's disinterestedness in bringing forward a bill regulating his own office, the intent of which was to prevent enormous balances from remaining in the hands of the paymaster of the forces.

The royal message respecting economy was speedily followed by another, requesting a discharge of arrears 2nd May

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1781. Arrears of the civil-list discharged.

3rd July.

of civil-list, amounting to nearly two hundred and ninety-six thousand pounds; the House voted the requisite sum, and the savings intended to be made by the reform bill were mortgaged for payment of the interest. This mode of blending the two transactions was vehemently decried in the upper House, as an infringement of their standing order made in 1702, that no bill of regulation should be allowed to pass with the appendage of a clause for granting money. The Lord Chancellor and Lord Loughborough supported this doctrine with great ability; but the House decided in contradiction to their judgment*.

25th June. Mr. Kenyon's motion.

Some further economical regulations were promised, but none effected during the session. The Attorney-General, Mr. Kenyon, distinguished himself by a motion for collecting into the Exchequer the balances in the hands of several paymasters. His original propositions extended to charge the holders of those balances with interest for the sums in hand; but Mr. Fox judiciously observed that, by so doing, Government would place its officers in the same situation with the guardians of a minor. "In the one case," he said, "there is an obligation to make the money superlu-"crate; in the other, none. To claim interest from "an accountant would justify him in placing the "money out at interest, and consequently render the "public liable for losses." A motion was made for bringing in a bill to carry into effect some of the resolutions moved by Mr. Kenyon, which was, however, after a debate of some warmth, rejected, and the new ministry left in a minority†. Some other unimportant essays were made on the pension-list, and some ineffectual attempts to render an object of censure a pension of a thousand pounds conferred on Lord Loughborough.

Efforts of pacification.

While the ministry were thus engaged in fulfilling the expectations they had raised respecting domestic regulation, they pursued with equal ardour the great object which made the nation solicitous for their at-

* 44 to 9. † 127 to 116.

tainment of power, the restoration of peace. An act of Parliament having passed, enabling the King to treat for a peace, or truce, with the American colonies, and, by letters patent, to repeal or suspend any statute relating to them. Mr. Thomas Grenville was dispatched to Paris as negotiator on our part; but, before he had made much progress in the objects of his mission, an event happened which occasioned a new revolution in the British cabinet. The Marquis of Rockingham had long been in a declining state of health. The debate on the bill for disqualifying revenue officers was the last in which he bore a part, and, as he then declared, a prevalent disorder* affected him so severely, that he was sometimes not in possession of himself. In less than a month afterward he expired, and the appointment of Lord Shelburne to be his successor, as first Lord of the Treasury, served as the signal (for it was denied to be the cause†) for the retreat of several conspicuous members of the Rockingham party. Lord John Cavendish resigned his place as Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Fox as Secretary of State; Mr. Burke gave up the paymastership of the forces; the Duke of Portland vacated the post of Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland; and his example was followed by Colonel Fitzpatrick, his secretary. Some less important appointments at the boards of Treasury and Admiralty were also resigned.

Death of the Marquis of Rockingham. 3rd June.

1st July.

Thus a few months of prosperity dissolved in anger and mutual animosity that formidable phalanx which, by strenuous parliamentary exertion, had shaken the foundations of government, rendered every exercise of royal prerogative odious and dangerous, made the cause of insurrection popular, and taken the cabinet by storm. The people did not sympathize with the self-excluded members of the cabinet, and the King declared that in the whole course of his reign this was the only administration which had not possessed his confidence‡.

* It acquired the name of influenza.

† See Debates in the Houses of Lords and Commons, 9th, 10th, and 11th of July, and 5th December, 1782.

‡ From private information.

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As Parliament was sitting, although the time of its prorogation was certainly near, this event occasioned, as might be expected, some animadversion and explanation.

Discussion in Parliament.

July 9. House of Commons.

Mr. Coke gave rise to the discussion in the House of Commons, by mentioning a pension of 3,200*l.* a year, which was granted to Colonel Barré, a friend and adherent of Lord Shelburne, to commence from the time that he should cease to hold the treasurership of the navy. He moved an address, requesting the King to inform the House which of the ministers had presumed to advise such a measure, in the present calamitous and distressed state of the country, and in the moment of reform. Mr. Frederick Montague acknowledged his having signed the warrant, as well as the late Marquis of Rockingham. Similar avowals were made by Lord Althorpe and Mr. Grenville; and the Colonel himself, after shewing that the pension, nominally 3,200*l.* a year, did not, after deducting taxes and fees, amount to more than 2,100*l.* stated the services and losses which, as he thought, intitled him to the gratuity. Losses and privations of preferment which he had sustained not for any military offence, but because he was a friend to the liberties of the people.

Causes of the late resignations explained.

This discussion produced no result, for Mr. Coke withdrew his motion; nor would it have demanded notice, but that it served, as it probably was intended, to introduce an explanation of the causes of the late resignations. Mr. Fox, after declaring his approbation of the grant, as a payment for services most honourably performed, and by no means lavish or misapplied, observed, that as he had censured and accused Lord North for having continued to hold the reins of government when there was no concert nor unanimity in the cabinet, for having remained responsible for measures of which he had not cordially approved, and when he found himself at the head of distracted councils; what was left for him, when in a similar situation? To retire. He considered it honourable to the party with whom he had the happiness to act, that they had not been the hunters of pensions and emoluments;

that was a point of wisdom with which his friends were particularly unacquainted. There were men so wise in their generation, as always to look forward to profit, and even secure it to themselves by the labours of others. Having reiterated his observations on the want of concord in the cabinet, he treated the existing ministers as men whose magnanimity rose superior to the common feelings of humanity; who thought nothing of promises which they had made, of engagements they had entered into, of principles they had maintained, or of the systems on which they had commenced their career. He had no doubt but that, to secure themselves in the power which by the labour of others they had obtained, *they would now strive to strengthen themselves by any means which corruption could procure; and he expected to see, that, in a very short time, they would be joined by those men whom that House had precipitated from their seats.*

General Conway denied that ministers had deviated from any principle they had maintained. The first was "the unlimited, unconditional independence of Ame-"rica as the basis of a negotiation for peace." This he had always considered a great evil; but it was become necessary. The second was, "to establish a "system of economy in every department of govern-"ment." Mr. Burke's bill was ready for the royal assent, and the principle had never been abandoned. The next was, "to annihilate every kind of influence "over any part of the legislature." The cabinet, he assured the House, was seriously inclined to carry this plan into execution. Another principle was, "to con-"tinue and secure to the kingdom of Ireland the "freedom now settled by Parliament," which had been done in the most unequivocal and decisive manner. As to three of these great principles, the House had already pronounced how faithfully they had been adhered to; and as to that which regarded America, time would convince them that the cabinet would maintain that no less firmly than the others.

Mr. Fox and General Conway twice more addressed the chair, each repelling the observations advanced by

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the other, oppugning or defending the ministry at present constituted. Mr. Pitt, considering and treating Mr. Fox as the ostensible man in that house, and therefore to be regarded as public property, claimed a right to question him on his conduct in resigning an important station, when the nature of affairs demanded the assistance of his great abilities. But that the Right Honourable Secretary had declared his secession to have proceeded from a material difference in the cabinet on some great political question, he should have attributed it to a baulk in struggling for power. It was, in his opinion, a dislike to men, not measures; and there appeared to be something personal in the business. If it was only a suspicion that Lord Shelburne was averse to the measures he wished to adopt, he should have called a cabinet council, before he had taken a step which appeared now to be rash and hasty. If he himself should be called upon to act in any capacity with the present administration, he should cheerfully assist the operations of government; he was a decided enemy to the late ruinous system of affairs; he would first endeavour to set them right, and, if he failed, would then resign, and not before.

To this Mr. Fox answered, that, far from engaging in a struggle for power, he had determined on resigning before the death of the Marquis of Rockingham; had communicated his intentions to a noble Duke; had called a cabinet council, and had well weighed the matter before he put it in execution. No one could expect the return to power of the old administration; that House would not suffer it: the people of England would not suffer it: no man, he believed, would be found to attempt it. He could not think Lord Shelburne sincere in desiring the independence of America. He had uniformly opposed that concession: when a man had attained the age of forty, his mind was generally made up; otherwise he was not worth a pin. He had consented to act with Lord Shelburne and the Lord Chancellor, although he knew they differed in opinion from him in many important particulars, because he wished to form an administration on

the broadest possible basis. He collected, from what Mr. Pitt had said, that he was to have some share in the new arrangement; he would undoubtedly be an honour to any place that could be assigned to him; but his experience in life was not sufficient to qualify him to judge properly of some great political questions.

This was the first display of that political opposition between Mr. Fox and Mr. Pitt which characterized the residue of their lives, and powerfully influenced the fortunes of their country.

The cause of the seceders was not advanced in dignity by the detail of the power, honours, and emoluments which they sacrificed; and, so little did the House sympathize with them, that Mr. Burke was for some time prevented from speaking by the noise which was raised among the members. He avenged himself by declaring that, while he felt the utmost consideration for one portion of the assembly, he entertained the most sovereign contempt for the other; and he concluded a speech of much asperity by observing, that if Lord Shelburne was not a Cataline or a Borgia in morals, it was to be ascribed only to his understanding. Any effect which this speech might have produced was much diminished by the manner in which Mr. Burke spoke of himself, his own circumstances, and his feelings. He said he had a pretty large family, and but little fortune. He liked his present office. The house and all its appendages, to a man of his taste, could not be disagreeable. All this, and four thousand a year, he relinquished, not without regret, for that country and that public whose property he was, and to whom he was always ready to surrender whatever he most valued in life. He had long been surfeited with opposition; those who were familiar with his habits, temper, and manners, would not call him petulant or factious, and he was only induced to leave an administration, to the formation of which he had somewhat contributed, by the sincerest regard for a public, in the service of which he wished to live and die. The ridicule which, whether justly or not, was cast upon this uncalled-for account of the conflict

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between poverty and principle, was increased by Mr. Burke's having preluded his declamation about Cataline and Borgia by an allusion to the nursery fable of Little Red-Riding-Hood and the Wolf.

Mr. Coke's motion was withdrawn.

July 10. House of Lords.

The Duke of Richmond introduced the subject in the House of Lords; but as no motion was made, and the only speakers were himself and Lord Shelburne, who both were to fill places in the new cabinet, nothing was produced but general declarations of opinion, and statements of the course of conduct intended to be pursued.

The next day Parliament was prorogued.

11th July. Prorogation of Parliament. King's speech.

In his speech, the King said that nothing could be more repugnant to his feelings than the long continuance of a war so complicated; but, should the want of a corresponding disposition in the enemy disappoint his hopes of terminating that calamity, he should still rely on the spirit, affection, and unanimity of his parliament and people to support the honour of his crown and the interests of the nation. "The most triumphant "career of victory," he said, "would not excite me to "aim at more than fair and reasonable terms of paci-"fication; and I have the satisfaction to add, I see no "reason which should induce me to think of accept-"ing less."

10th. Shelburne administration.

The offices which had been vacated were thus filled up. The Right Honourable William Pitt was Chancellor of the Exchequer; Lord Grantham and Mr. Thomas Townshend Secretaries of State; Colonel Barré was made Paymaster of the Forces, and, in his stead, Mr. Dundas Treasurer of the Navy; Sir George Younge became Secretary at War. Seats at the treasury and admiralty boards were allotted to Richard Jackson and Edward James Elliot, Esquires; the Honourable John Jefferies Pratt and John Aubrey, Esquire. Earl Temple was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and the Honourable William Wyndham Grenville his Secretary. Lord Thurlow, Chancellor; Lord Keppel, first Lord of the Admiralty; Lord Camden, President

of the Council; the Duke of Grafton, Lord Privy Seal; the Duke of Richmond, Master General of the Ordnance; and Lord Ashburton, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, retained their posts: and thus was formed the Shelburne administration.

CHAPTER THE FORTY-SIXTH.

1781—1782.

Necessity for peace.—Transactions in America—Condition of the loyalists.—Board of Directors formed.—Murder of Joshua Huddy.—Washington determines to kill a British officer in revenge.—Captain Asgill selected—spared.—Views of Washington as to the war.—Effect of parliamentary proceedings.—The Loyalists.—Proceedings on the arrival of Sir Guy Carleton.—Attempt to negotiate separately with Holland.—Mediation of the Empress of Russia.—Failure.—Offer of the Emperor to mediate.—Altered conduct of the Imperial court.—Mr. Grenville in Paris.—Sanguine hopes of adverse powers—their state.—Spain.—France.—Mr. Fox's letter to Dr. Franklin.—Answer.—Instructions to Mr. Grenville.—Conduct of Dr. Franklin and De Vergennes.—Mr. Grenville's interview with them.—Increasing pretensions of the allied powers.

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Necessity for peace.

From the course of events, and the feelings of all parties, it was obvious that a general pacification must be attempted. A negotiation was commenced; but, before its final issue is related, some other events, which affected its beginning or its progress, must be recorded.

Transactions in America.

The continent of America no longer presented its accustomed portion of military interest: the blaze of war, which was first kindled, also first languished, in the colonies, the surrender of Lord Cornwallis having in effect concluded the martial contest. Sir Henry Clinton was apprized that no more regiments or corps could be sent from this country, it being only proposed to keep up those in America as near as possible to their present establishment by recruits. It was expected that they could maintain the posts and districts

Jan. 3.

still in his Majesty's possession, and that detachments could occasionally be spared for joint operations with the navy against ports and towns on the sea-coast, for destroying shipping and stores, and obstructing trade so as to prevent offensive efforts. But, although no inland operations for reducing the country were intended, all possible encouragement was to be given to loyalists, by arms, ammunition, and, where possible, a small force*.

Soon after the action at Eutaws, Colonel Stewart retreated to the neighbourhood of Charlestown, and Colonel Leslie, who was afterward appointed to command in that district, retired within the walls of the capital. Slight excursions and trivial encounters alone marked the existence of hostility; the British troops were withdrawn from all their late extended possessions in the southern provinces, except Charlestown, Savannah, and a few dependent posts; while the enemy, re-assembling their legislature at Jackson-burgh, distant only thirty-five miles from the capital of South Carolina, insulted the British government, issuing edicts of regulation, reward, and credit, and decrees of confiscation against all friends of the royal cause†.

The loyalists at New York being filled with alarm and indignation at the tenth article of the capitulation of York Town, Sir Henry Clinton attempted to tranquillize them by circular orders to the different posts of the army, directing that the same attention should, in all cases, be paid to their interests and security as to those of the King's troops, and that no distinction or discrimination should prevail. This judicious order, which was subsequently confirmed by the King, produced in a great measure the desired effect. 11th Jan. and 1st Mar.

But when the departure of De Grasse's fleet for the West Indies, and the exertions of Clinton had quieted all alarms, the inveteracy between loyalists and republicans produced new contentions, and threatened a mode of vengeful hostility more dreadful than

* Lord George Germaine to Sir Henry Clinton. State Papers.
† See Remembrancer, vol. xiv. pp. 137, 140.

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any which had yet been pursued. The Americans had always affected to consider the loyalists taken in arms, as traitors amenable to their civil administration. Lord Rawdon described the atrocious barbarities of the rebel militia toward them, as exceeding any thing he had ever heard from the most savage nations*. Threats had sometimes restrained the excess of violence; but the Americans frequently refused quarter to the loyalists, and often maintained prisoners of that description in a different state of confinement from other military captives, loading them with injuries, depriving them of necessaries, and endangering their lives by inhumanity†.

Board of directors formed.

A board of directors of associated loyalists, under the presidency of Governor Franklin, had been established, in 1780, at New York, invested with administrative powers, the right of nominating officers, and issuing regulations for their guidance and government, subject to the ratification of the Commander-in-Chief. They had a prison for captives brought in by their parties, and the power of exchange or release, but with the express condition of not killing or maltreating any under pretext of retaliation. Their angry and vindictive feelings were excited by a signal piece of treachery, followed by consequences extremely irritating. One Christian Prendorff, a prisoner on parole from New York, after taking the oath of secrecy, and professing sincere attachment to the loyal associators, was entrusted with their combination, the names of many of their officers and privates, with their instructions and plans. He went to Annapolis and betrayed all the secrets with which he was entrusted. Many were, in consequence, seized, tried by courts-martial of militia officers, or by special courts instituted for the purpose, condemned and executed. Some armed themselves and escaped; but the transaction created great alarm and general confusion in Pensacola‡.

* Dispatch to Lord George Germaine, 6th June, 1781.

† See letter from the board of loyalists to Sir Henry Clinton, dated New York, 27th April, 1782, in the Remembrancer, vol. xiv. p. 157.

‡ 29th June, 1781. Report from Thomas Hagertz, in Maryland. State Papers.

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After the capitulation of Lord Cornwallis, many loyalists urged Sir Henry Clinton to threaten vengeance for injuries inflicted on those who had joined the royal standard; but he declined issuing a proclamation, the menaces of which he was not authorized to fulfil, and was deterred, by the advice of the principal refugees, from establishing the civil government, which would have permitted the trial of captive continentals as rebels. While he was engaged in projects of defence, and while commissioners appointed by him and General Washington were negotiating for an exchange of prisoners, Joshua Huddy, a captain in the service of Congress, was taken by a party of loyalists, and, after being conveyed to several prisons, and confined some days, delivered, with two others, by a written order from the board, to Captain Lippencott, one of their body, for the ostensible purpose of being exchanged at Sandy Hook, conducted into New Jersey, and there hung on a tree, with a label on his breast, denoting that his fate was a retaliation for that of one White, an associator.

Murder of Joshua Huddy.

Sir Henry Clinton, highly resenting this audacious outrage on humanity, and insult on himself as commander, arrested Lippencott, and, with the concurrence of a council of war, ordered him to be tried for murder. He thought the transaction indicated a resolution in the loyalists to force measures of revenge which they had long thirsted after, but which he had refused to sanction, and he anticipated the insults to which he should be exposed from the resentment of the American general, and the danger of his commissioners, who were in the power of the enemy. The inhabitants of Monmouth County addressed General Washington, as the person in whom was lodged the sole power of avenging their wrongs, to bring a British officer of the same rank with Huddy to a similar end.

14th April.

Acting with great promptitude on this requisition, the American forwarded it to the British commander, with a letter, conceived in terms most excessively harsh and arrogant. "I *demand*," he said, "that the "guilty Captain Lippencott, or the officer who com-

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" manded at the execution of Huddy *must* be given up. " Or, if that officer was of inferior rank to him, so many " of the perpetrators as will, according to the tariff of " exchange, be equivalent. In failure of it, I shall " hold myself justified, in the eyes of God and man, " for the measures to which I shall resort."

25th. Clinton expressed surprise and displeasure at this imperious language; he had taken due measures for bringing the delinquents to justice; but would not consent to adopt and extend barbarity, by sacrificing innocence, under the notion of preventing guilt. If violations of humanity could be justified by example, those committed by General Washington's party ex-

27th April. ceeded, and probably gave rise to that in question. The board of loyalists, corroborating this assertion, stated circumstances relating to the execution of Huddy, in which, though Lippencott had exceeded his authority and their orders, he had merely adopted the precedent shewn by the Americans in the case of White. They also recited many instances in which cruelty toward the loyalists had only been restrained by retaliation. The letter of Washington was accompanied with depositions to shew that Huddy was not concerned in the murder of White; but, on the other hand, was produced Huddy's own confession of his activity in mur-

25th. dering associated loyalists, with a detail of seventeen of his victims.

Unmoved by these representations, Washington seized as deserters Messrs. Hatfield and Badgely, though protected by a flag of truce. To an application for their liberation, he answered, that deserters, or characters whom crime rendered amenable to the civil laws, could not be protected, even under a flag.

Recall of Sir Henry Clinton.

Sir Henry Clinton was spared the pain of witnessing the progress of this transaction, by his recall, which was solicited by his friends, and, after repeated refusals, at length granted. His whole command had been a succession of disappointments and mortifications; his projects were countenanced, yet unsupported, and his supplies withheld, or sparingly and tardily sent. He sustained no inconsiderable share of the rancour of

party, and was undefended, even by those who, from principle, ought to have been his supporters. Yet he was above the weakness of throwing himself into the arms of faction for the elucidation of misrepresented facts. He received from the King, both through his ministers and in the closet, the fullest approbation of his conduct and plans; and this satisfactory testimonial was the only reward of an arduous and severe struggle.

Sir Guy Carleton was appointed his successor; and, in the interval between the departure of the one General and the arrival of the other, the command devolved on General Robertson. To him General Washington addressed a letter, declaring his unaltered adherence to the resolutions he had expressed to Clinton. Orders had been given to designate a British officer for retaliation; the time and place were fixed, but still he hoped that the result of a court-martial would prevent this dreadful alternative. This proceeding was resorted to, but not attended with the effect which the American desired. The prisoner, at first, pleaded that he was not subject to martial law, and by common law could not be tried in New York for an offence alleged to have been committed in another state, that of New Jersey. This objection, being submitted to the consideration of the Chief Justice and the Attorney-General, was over-ruled; the trial proceeded; but, as it appeared from the evidence that Lippencott acted under the orders of a board which he was bound to obey, he was acquitted. And now the barbarous edict of retaliation was about to be enforced. The officers who had been surrendered at York Town, and whose persons ought to have been sacred under the terms of the capitulation, were directed to cast lots, to determine who should be the expiatory victim. It fell on Captain Asgill, son of Sir Charles Asgill, who was only in his nineteenth year; and against this inhuman sacrifice, intreaty and argument were, with the American General, equally unavailing. To close at once this painful and disgraceful narrative, it is to be added, that the innocence and amiable qualities of the young officer, and the anguish and pathetic supplications of his

May 3rd.

Captain Asgill selected.

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family, which produced no effect on Washington, found their way to the heart of the French Queen; influenced by the prayers and tears of the captive's mother, she interposed her powerful mediation, and, with the aid of M. de Vergennes, and through him of M. de la Luzerne, the plenipotentiary of Louis, obtained from Congress an order for Asgill's discharge. In obeying this behest, General Washington most strangely arrogated to himself the honour of humanity. In whatever light his agency might be viewed, he said, he was never influenced by sanguinary motives, but was now happy in sparing the effusion of innocent blood. That his conduct wanted defence is evident from his attempting it, and it was so considered by all Europe; but his observations are not calculated to enforce any conviction beyond the refutation of a charge which was never advanced, that he was actuated by personal malice*.

Views of Washington as to the war.

However the British Government and people were depressed and alarmed by the events of the last campaign, General Washington considered them as by no means sufficient to insure a speedy termination of the contest on the only terms which America would accept, the complete and unqualified recognition of her independence. Sensible of the spirit hitherto displayed by the cabinet and nation, he could not believe that the great public cause would be surrendered without trying the events of another campaign; and he feared that, in his own army, the lassitude occasioned by long service, and the discontents arising from want and neglect, would combine with other causes to produce a conviction that further exertions were unnecessary. On this important subject he explained himself fully to Congress, who, acknowledging the wisdom of his suggestions, issued, with unusual unanimity, the necessary orders for financial supplies and military reinforcements: but orders alone would not effect such objects; the power to supply money, or the disposition to enter into military service, no longer existed; and,

* Remembrancer, vol. xiv. pp. 155 et seq. Annual Register, 1783. Appendix to the Chronicle. Sparks's Life of Washington, vol. i. p. 378. Letters in the State Paper Office.

although the General enforced the necessity of exertion by two spirited and well-written circular letters to the Governors of the States, it was soon apparent that the only hope of pecuniary supply rested on France; and such was the languid state of warlike ardour, that, when he arrived in camp, he found the whole number of effective men in the northern army below ten thousand, and no probability of a speedy increase.

April.

Effect of Parliamentary proceedings.

The declaration of ministers at the beginning of the session, which were the latest known in America, were not calculated to produce perfect quiet. To renounce offensive enterprizes, while strong posts were to be maintained, commerce interrupted, and assistance afforded to loyalists, promised only an intermission, not a relinquishment of further operations, and a reserved intention to resume them, should time and circumstances render it desirable. Such was the impression made on the mind of the General, and he communicated it to Congress*.

The loyalists.

The loyalists maintained to the last the high and noble principles to which they had devoted themselves. They were divided into two classes; those who had been obliged to abandon their country and take refuge with the British army, and those who had remained at home, but refused to take the oaths required by the revolutionary government. The first portion had, without exception, been attainted, either by acts of the provincial legislatures, in which they were expressly named, or by proceedings before sheriffs. Their estates were confiscated, and their debtors, whether by bond, mortgage, or otherwise, decreed, under severe penalties, to pay the amount into the public treasury. The latter class had been excluded from voting at elections or holding offices, and subjected to double and treble taxation. To support these meritorious persons would have been an act worthy of the highest commendation, if it could have been reconciled to prudence, and if a plan had been formed which would render their high sentiments available to

* Sparks's Life of Washington, vol. i. c. 14.

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any beneficial purpose. Their countrymen hated them with most deadly rancour.

1782. 7th May. Proceedings on the arrival of Sir Guy Carleton.

When he assumed the command of the army, Sir Guy Carleton accompanied the official intelligence of his arrival with the pacific vote of the House of Commons, adding a declaration of his intentions to alleviate as much as possible the horrors of war, and requesting a passport for his aid-de-camp to communicate with

9th May. Congress at Philadelphia. Washington refused the passport, and limited the admission of flags of truce

21st May. to one single spot. His conduct was approved by Congress; and that body*, and several provincial legislatures, as if apprehensive of a schism on the subject of peace, renewed or adopted resolutions against entering into a separate treaty with Great Britain†.

Attempt to negotiate separately with Holland.

As the powers combined against Great Britain had engaged in hostilities at different periods, and upon distinct grounds of quarrel, it was not unreasonable to expect that separate treaties might be negotiated, and that each power, feeling its own individual interests, might relinquish an union which was not concerted by any common cause of complaint or any general motive.

1782. January 16.

It appeared probable that Holland would be the first to secede from an association from which no benefit was likely to accrue, and which had already been productive of so much calamity and evil. At an early period of the year, Mr. Wentworth was entrusted by the ministry with an ostensible commission to treat for the exchange of prisoners, but with secret powers to attempt discovering the sentiments of the leading men at Amsterdam, to maintain an appearance of a negotiation, whatever might be the final issue, but without giving any advantage to those with whom he might treat. The terms he was directed to propose were not calculated to obtain ready compliance; but, in discussing them, modifications might have been devised. They were, first, a proper satisfaction for the affront given to his Majesty's dignity by the treaty with his rebellious subjects, and the punishment of those who

* See Remembrancer, vol. xiv. p. 144. † Idem, p. 143, 182.

took part in it; second, that the United Provinces should afford no asylum, aid, or protection, to pretended ministers or agents of the United States, but oblige them, particularly Mr. Adams, to withdraw from their territories immediately; to prohibit the negotiation of loans for their use, and to interdict the reception of their ships, either armed or commercial, in their ports in any quarter of the globe; and third, to renew all compacts which had subsisted between the two countries before the late rupture, excepting the maritime treaty of 1674. It might easily be seen that England was not in a situation to command such terms; and the hope of negotiating was excluded by a discovery that the leading men in Holland had insuperable objections to a renewal of the ancient connexion*.

Mediation of the Empress of Russia.

The Empress was not deterred by her recent failure from resuming her attempts at mediation. The Dutch accepted her offer, provided that the unbounded liberty of the sea should be laid down as a fundamental basis. In making this artful proposal, the Dutch shewed a complete knowledge of the views and feelings of her to whom it was tendered. The desire which most impressed her mind and flattered her pride was that of introducing this new principle into the code of national law; and Count Osterman, the vice-chancellor, assured Sir James Harris, that if England would consent to this acknowledgment, she might have peace with Holland on her own terms. The crafty Hollanders foresaw that Lord North and his friends would never accede to such terms; but, immediately on his accession to power, Mr. Fox proposed to M. Simolin a renewed negotiation under the mediation of the Empress, with an armistice until articles should be arranged; and as to the principle which the Dutch as well as the Empress insisted on, he offered to yield it, in deference to her imperial Majesty.

Feb. 18.

29th March.

2nd April.

Before this period, it was supposed that the English party in Holland had gained more authority, and hopes were entertained of triumphing over the French fac-

* State Papers.

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1781. tion, who strove to impede the treaty, without openly contravening the Empress. The first measure was to procure from Sweden an offer to co-operate in the mediation, which the British cabinet refused, alleging
18th Sept. their former promise to the Empress*. Although the States-general shewed more favourable dispositions than formerly toward Great Britain, it was obvious that, if France obtained many of their foreign settlements by compact or recapture, and an apparent naval superiority, no separate treaty with England could take place. The Cape of Good Hope was already under the protection of France: and soon afterward De Bouillé reconquered their most important West India settlements. The escape of M. De Guichen from Kempenfelt, and the great projects meditated by France and Spain in the transatlantic world, together with the hopeless state of the British arms in Europe, the capture of Minorca, and blockade of Gibraltar, gave a decisive turn to the politics of the Hague.
1782. Their answer to the offer of the Empress precluded
March. the hope of peace; and an article in the new compacts between Holland and France prevented either from making a separate treaty.

20th. This intelligence not having reached England when the pacific propositions and concessions were made, ministers expressed in Parliament, with the utmost confidence, the intention of effecting a separate reconciliation, and directed our ambassadors to lose no opportunity of cultivating a good understanding with those of Holland; but the republic persisted in the original design of fortifying the connexion with France. In various instances the ascendancy of this influence was evinced. The States of Holland first, and subsequently the States-general, received and acknowledged Mr. Adams as minister from the United States of America; a measure which, as Mr. Fox observed, shewed a strong disinclination in the republic to smooth the way to peace, although he hoped it would not be an insurmountable impediment. The Empress was

* See Annual Register, 1781. Article, State Papers.

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offended at the slight shewn to her mediation, and jealous of the growing ascendancy of French influence at the Hague; but the Dutch, over confident in the Bourbon alliance, treated her opinions with disrespect, and finally rejected the proposed interference*.

19th. Failure.

As the pacific intentions of the new ministry were well known, the imperial ambassador, Count Belgioioso, again proffered the good offices of his court, in an *insinuation verbale;* to which the Secretary of State answered, that the King did not wish to prejudge any question, or to exclude any party from the negotiation; neither the States-general, nor the American colonies; he was ardently desirous of peace, and wished that it should be speedy, but it must be equitable.

April. Offer of the Emperor to mediate.

28th April.

Austria had, however, no right to presume that Great Britain should rely with implicit confidence on her mediatory efforts. It had long been apparent to the English ambassador that Prince Kaunitz entertained toward the cause of Great Britain sentiments nearly approaching to malevolence. He predicted her failure in the contest, and the necessity of ultimately making large concessions; and when statesmen publicly indulge in such prophecies, they will rather contribute to the event by their own exertions, than suffer their prescience to fall into discredit. Kaunitz entered into the armed confederacy with almost as much zeal as Catherine herself, and was preparing, by the influence of the Emperor, to make Venice adopt the same measure. His language to the English ambassador was changed from extreme kindness to a haughty, harsh, morose tone; and, on every misfortune which attended the British arms, the renewal of an offer to mediate was accompanied with revilings and taunts against the proud national spirit which had frustrated former efforts. This alteration of conduct was the more offensive, as the French ambassador was treated with proportionate confidence, always preferred in audiences, and ostentatiously courted with peculiar homage.

Altered conduct of the imperial court.

The cause of Great Britain seemed degraded to

* Letters in the State Paper Office, under the dates mentioned, and many more.

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the lowest state; ill success, and the prevalent opinion of mismanagement, rendered the espousal of it among the selfish powers of the continent almost disreputable; and, probably, the hope of wringing from the distressed situation of the country concessions favourable to a system of neutral duplicity, occasioned the eagerness of the imperial courts to assume the task of mediation.

7th May. Mr. Grenville sent to Paris.

Under these difficult and critical circumstances, in conformity with the answers returned by the Bourbon courts, ministers empowered Sir Robert Murray Keith, the ambassador at Vienna, to commence a treaty under the auspices of their imperial Majesties. But as Mr. Thomas Grenville was already dispatched, as Mr. Oswald had been before him, though without any public character, to open a direct negotiation with M. De Vergennes; and as Paris was likely to be the principal scene of business, Sir Robert was instructed not to make, or even much encourage, an overture for negotiation at Vienna; though he was not, by receding from the proposition, to disgust the mediating powers, or create suspicions of our sincerity.

Sanguine hopes of the enemy.

An attempt to negotiate on the part of Great Britain was hailed by her enemies as the undisguised indication of debility and despair. The unmeasured triumph displayed on our late disasters, the proud boasts of preparations for our destruction in all quarters of the world, and the confident anticipation of their result, were countenanced, if not instigated, by the gloomy forebodings of our own party in opposition. When Mr. Oswald, who was accompanied with Mr. David, had arrived, the French journalists, who dared to publish only what they were permitted, and could not refuse to promulgate whatever they were commanded, announced the event by stating a report current in Paris, that two Englishmen had recently arrived to make overtures for peace. "It will not be an "easy matter; we are sure of Gribraltar and Jamaica, "and probably the English will not long retain any "colony in the West Indies; nor are their prospects, "to our certain knowledge, more brilliant in India."

March 15th.

Whatever hope might be derived from the real or

exaggerated calamities of England, the internal situations of the countries of the allies afforded them no ground of confidence. Spain was reduced to a dependence on the subscription of individuals, not in aid, but as the chief support of government; without success, she had attempted to gain credit by establishing a bank; but the notes could only be put into circulation at a ruinous discount; with difficulty she had obtained from Portugal a loan of twenty millions of piastres (£3,550,000) at eight per cent. interest; but, even with this aid, her paper was at a discount of fourteeen per cent.; her South American colonies were torn by rebellion; and if England had retaliated on Spain by affording only slight succours to the insurgents, the whole Spanish marine and a great land force would have been required for their reduction.

State of the enemy.

France, awaking from the dream of financial delusion, had discovered that Necker had proceeded in the war without the imposition of taxes, by borrowing, every year, in addition to the current supplies, the interest of previous loans; a system which would in time call for severe impositions, or general bankruptcy. It also appeared that the present war had been carried on at a greater expense of treasure than any which had occurred since the days of Louis XIV. Not less than five or six millions sterling had been coined every year at the different mints, and carried out of the country. Guineas were purchased at four per cent. premium, while victuals, clothing, and many other articles were bought from Great Britain; and contraband trade was carried on to an immense extent. Even in this reduced state, her beggared exchequer was taxed for a supply of £350,000, to relieve the more urgent necessities of America.

France

State of America

Even after the surrender of Lord Cornwallis, the attainment of American independence by force, appeared to many no more certain than at at any previous period. The resources of the country were exhausted, the long interruption of commerce produced a lamentable want of all necessaries, a want felt from the highest to the lowest classes throughout the colo-

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nies. No art or coercion could give circulation to the paper currency; a loan negotiated in Holland failed; and, after the pecuniary contribution already noticed, Franklin obtained as a loan, for the service of the current year, six millions of livres (£250,000); but it was inadequate to its purposes, and in great part consumed before it was obtained*: and not only the friends of Great Britain, but the warmest adherents of America, considered the maintenance of the army for another year, and still more the establishment of independency, as utterly impossible, and hardly desirable†. After the surrender of Lord Cornwallis, Sir Henry Clinton forwarded an assurance to administration, that, with a reinforcement of ten thousand men only, he would be responsible for the conquest of America‡. Other officers were no less sanguine; they professed, that with only a few battalions they could march from one end of the continent to the other. In communicating this boastful intimation, Mr. Oswald very properly observed, that military men, generally inattentive to circumstances out of the line of their profession, relied with too much confidence on representations, which, however sincere and well-meant, had been so often found to be fallacious§. But had it been otherwise, the ministers, who alone could be expected to give to Clinton's advice effect, were shaken; a new system was adopted, active hostilities were no more to be pursued, and he was allowed to retire.

Objections to independence.

The latest struggle of the defeated administration was to avert from the country the disgrace of a hasty and compulsory concession of American independence; to this tended their desire to maintain a war of posts, and their overtures for a coalition. The Rockingham party had long declared, and consistently supported, the justice and inevitable necessity of granting independence; but Lord Shelburne had been no less strenuous in asserting that disgrace and calamity must

* Memoirs of Franklin, vol. ii. p. 324.
† See intercepted Letters of Silas Deane, Remembrancer, vol. xiii. p. 71.
‡ From private information.
§ 7th of August, 1782. Mr. Oswald to Lord Shelburne. State Papers.

ensue to Great Britain from such a concession. He had made an explicit declaration in the House of Lords, "that he would never enter into an official "situation with any man, however great his abili- "ties, who would either maintain that it was right or "consistent to allow the independency of America*;" and, even in the present session of Parliament, Mr. Dunning, his confidential friend and adviser, had treated the proposition as almost amounting to high treason. But Lord Shelburne had either receded from his former opinions, or would not venture to encounter such an opposition as he had witnessed and supported against Lord North.

May 1. Mr. Fox's letter to Dr. Franklin.

Mr. Grenville was furnished with proper credentials, but directed to seek an introduction to M. De Vergennes through Dr. Franklin; a measure quite unnecessary, as he had already been introduced during the embassy of Lord Stormont. In taking this course, Mr. Fox availed himself of the opportunity of writing a letter to Dr. Franklin, with whom he does not appear to have been previously acquainted, containing assurances of his esteem and respect; begging him to believe that the change in his situation had not made any in his ardent wishes for reconciliation, and expressing confidence that no prejudices against Mr. Grenville's name would prevent a due estimation of his excellent qualities of heart and head, or a belief in the sincerity of his wishes for peace. In answer, Dr. Franklin, acknowledged the excellent qualities of Mr. Grenville, and declared that the name did not lessen the regard which they were calculated to inspire†.

10th. Answer.

April 30. Instructions to Mr. Grenville.

Mr. Grenville's instructions were, after endeavouring to ascertain the sincerity of De Vergennes, to assure him of his Majesty's earnest desire of peace, and request a general outline of his notions on the subject. He was to state the King's readiness to concede the point so much insisted on, and declared by the Court of Versailles, in the last answer to the mediating powers, to be the true subject of the war, the

* See debates in the House of Lords, 7th December, 1778: the conclusion of Lord Shelburne's speech.

† Franklin's Memoirs, vol. ii. pp. 331, 335.

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complete independency of the American states, with an evacuation of all the posts still retained in that country, provided that a reciprocal restitution should take place in all quarters of the globe, and every thing be reinstated as it was at the peace of Paris. He was to communicate this plan to Dr. Franklin, to try whether a separate treaty could be effected, and afterwards see Count d'Aranda or not, as circumstances might direct.

Conduct of Dr. Franklin and De Vergennes. May 9.

If ministers really expected to accomplish separate treaties, they were speedily undeceived. At their first interview, Dr. Franklin informed Mr. Grenville that he, Mr. Laurens, Mr. Jay, and Mr. Adams, all or any of them, had power to bind Congress by any treaty they should make. They had no engagements with France beyond the late treaties of alliance and commerce, which were already public; but America was under great obligations to France, and must preserve good faith. Mr. Grenville stated, that peace on reasonable terms was the wish of every body; but, as an interview with M. De Vergennes was arranged for the morrow, particulars were not entered into. Franklin suggested that Spain might want something, perhaps Gibraltar, which, he said, could be of little use to England, now she had lost Minorca, and had less commerce to defend. Mr. Grenville said, he hoped no such demand would be made, as all England was decided on the subject; nor could it be of any importance to America who retained or who acquired that fortress. He made an experiment on the sentiments of America, by enquiring whether there was in that country a good disposition toward England? Franklin answered that there were roots, but they would require much management; and he intimated, as one mode of displaying kindness, that the prisoners returning to America should be supplied with money, and that the British Government should make the disbursements necessary to enable those whose houses had been destroyed during the war to rebuild them*.

* Mr. Grenville to Mr. Fox, 10th May; and Franklin, vol. ii. p. 332, where the account is very meagre.

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10th.

This conversation afforded no hope of a separate, and little of any peace with the Colonies; but the interview of the following day placed the expectation at a distance still more remote. From the accounts of the two parties already referred to, it may be collected, that the French minister shewed, in reality, no disposition to treat, but rather affected to deride the propositions which were submitted to him. On the proposal that, in consideration of the concession of American independence, France should give up the British islands, and receive back Miquelon and St. Pierre, he said, and (in a manner which in an affair of less importance might have been deemed ludicrous) called Franklin to witness, that France had not made America independent, but found her so*. The Doctor confirmed this observation, by saying that his countrymen could not consider themselves under any necessity of bargaining for that which was in their possession, purchased at such an expense of blood and treasure. In answer to the observation, that in this concession the sole object of the war had been attained, the French minister referred with much bitterness to the acquisitions, beyond the original objects of the last war, which England had made at the peace of Paris. On the subject of India, he said, "Why cannot you be con-" tent with Bengal. Your arms are grown too long " for your body." Finally, he expressed a strong persuasion, that England must make many important and extensive sacrifices before negotiation could be entertained with the least prospect of success, the last peace being that which both France and Spain were most intent upon excluding from consideration. In that transaction, the French had experienced every indignity from us; he could not read it without shuddering; and, in making a new treaty, his country must be relieved from every circumstance in which its dignity had been hurt†. On another occasion, he said

* Considering what had passed between him and Lord Stormont from 1776 to 1778, it required no ordinary share of confidence in M. De Vergennes to make this assertion. Ante, vol. ii p. 535, 537.

† Mr. Grenville's dispatch above mentioned, and Franklin, p. 332. It is curious to observe, and not easily to be accounted for, that in their corre-

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that if the treaty of 1763 must be mentioned at all, the expression should be, not that it shall be confirmed, but that it shall be annulled, except as to certain particulars.

May 21 Increasing pretensions of the allied powers.

In the progress of the negotiation, the enemy, far from mitigating, rather enhanced their claims on England. Count d' Aranda adopted the declaration that his country had no share in creating the independence of America; she expected the cession of Florida and Gibraltar; France required very essential alterations in the Newfoundland fishery and the African trade; more than Grenada in the West Indies, and an extensive surrender of commerce and territory in India. It was expected, and Franklin countenanced the expectation, that these demands would be supported by America. As the independence of America was not to be a conditional article, but a preliminary concession, it was expected that a treaty with that country could have been effected without the introduction of other powers; for, if her ministers refused to treat without France, and France maintained that, as Spain and Holland were her allies, she could not proceed without them, difficulties would arise sufficient to render a treaty hopeless. De Vergennes objected to Mr. Grenville's credentials, because they did not extend to all the belligerent powers; not that all should be included in one treaty, but that sufficient authority should be given to treat with all; and to this extent, Mr. Grenville's powers were enlarged*.

spondence, at this period, both the English and American negotiator substituted for the title of *Doctor*, by which Franklin was known to all the world, the less dignified term *Mr.* (Franklin, pp 332, 335, 336.) Mr. Grenville was too polite and considerate to offer this as an affront; and, by submitting to and acquiescing in such a mark of disrespect, if intended, Franklin would have shewn himself deficient in the manly pride which became his station. It was also a circumstance worth notice, that La Fayette endeavoured to persuade Franklin, that he ought to be employed in London, as the Duc de Nemours had been during the negotiation of the last peace; he was, he said, an American citizen, and well able, from his knowledge of both languages, to collect and impart useful information. He was desirous of being introduced to Mr Grenville and Mr. Oswald. Dr. Franklin does not seem to have interested himself in promoting the wish of the Marquis; but proposed to Mr. Oswald to meet him at breakfast, "as he might have some curiosity to see a person who had in this war rendered "himself so remarkable" Nothing further was done in the matter, and the project was abandoned. Franklin, pp. 334, 348.

* In all, but the places where other authority is expressly quoted, the information is derived from documents in the State Paper Office.

CHAPTER THE FORTY-SEVENTH.

1778—1782.

Expectations and projects of the Enemy.—Return of Admiral Rodney to England.—His interview with the King.—Letter of Lord Sandwich—he sails.—Rodney's arrival at Barbadoes.—State of Jamaica.—Proceedings of Rodney.—His fleet.—Vast preparations of France and Spain.—Partial actions.—Great victory.—Conduct of ministers toward Rodney.—His recall.—Motions of thanks and honours. Proceedings in the West Indies.—The Bahamas taken.—Destruction of settlements.—Captures by the English.—Slow progress of the negotiation.—Effect of Rodney's victory in France.—Treatment of De Grasse.—War in India.—Capture of French settlements.—Siege of Pondicherry.—Action between Vernon and Tronjolly.—Pondicherry taken.—Sentiments of Hyder Ally.—Mahé taken.—War with the natives.—Efforts of France.—War with Holland.—Secret expedition.—Commodore Johnstone attacked by De Suffrein.—Five Dutch East-indiamen taken.—Negapatam and other places taken.—Arrival of the English squadron.—Sir Edward Hughes captures six transports—his first, second, and third engagements with De Suffrein.—Trincomalé recaptured—Fourth engagement. Siege of Cuddalore.—Fifth engagement.—Naval exertions in Europe.—Sundry captures.—The Dutch confined in port.—Junction of the French and Spanish fleets.—Fate of Rodney's prizes.—Loss of the Royal George.—Progress of negotiation—America, France—Holland and Spain.

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HITHERTO the negotiating powers had treated Great Britain as a prostrate enemy, bound to endure censures and to receive commands, humbly to sue for

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peace, and to receive it as a boon graciously bestowed, without presuming to resist or almost daring to complain. Considering that the persons now in power had for so many years proclaimed the wrongs of America, vindicated her proceedings, and gloried in sharing the sentiments she professed; considering too that success warranted some presumption; it is not to be wondered at if Dr. Franklin assumed a lofty tone, made extravagant claims, or demanded larger concessions than could be warranted by any reasoning fairly resulting from events. Opinions of the prostrate condition of England were derived from or confirmed by persons who were employed to offer propositions of peace. From their representations to Mr. Adams at the Hague, he wrote to Dr. Franklin that the distresses of the people and the distractions in administration and Parliament were sufficient to produce almost any effect that could be imagined. Franklin entertained similar, or even stronger notions. On the expulsion of Lord North, he stated it as a doubtful proposition, whether the new ministry would ask a peace, of which they had great need, having of late suffered many losses, men grown extremely scarce, and Lord North's new taxes, proposed as funds for the loan, meeting with great opposition; or whether they would strive to find new resources and obtain allies, to enable them to please the King and nation by some vigorous exertions against France, Spain, and Holland. "With regard to America," he observed, "having, "while in opposition, carried their vote for making no "longer an offensive war with us, they have tied their "own hands from acting against us*."

March 26th.

France and Spain did not stand in a position so advantageous with the ministers of England. They had been applauded as supporters of a favoured cause; their naval, military, and financial operations had been wildly extolled; but no one had been carried so far by the zeal of party as to wish the accomplishment of their designs for our ruin; and their present presumption

* Franklin's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 293, 298.

arose from their success in effecting the severance from us of those colonies which were deemed essential to our existence, the acquisition of several of our most valued possessions, and in the anticipated success of plans for annihilating our naval superiority, wresting from us our remaining and most highly valued transatlantic possessions, destroying our power in India, and disgracing and humbling us in our own estimation and the eyes of all the world, by the conquest of a fortress, which, whatever its value, was estimated by every Englishman as a possession with which our national fame and honour were inseparably connected. These plans were so well matured, and their execution so amply provided for, that a failure seemed nearly impossible, and the enemy assumed as much confidence as if success had already been attained.

1781. Return of Admiral Rodney to England.

When the negotiation had proceeded to the extent already mentioned, intelligence was received of the termination of one of these attempts; an event most important to the interest and honour of the country. When the approach of the hurricane season rendered further naval operations improbable, and the state of affairs in the West Indies made his absence not improper, Admiral Rodney, foreseeing the efforts which would be made by France and Spain in the ensuing year, and sensible of the necessity of meeting by adequate reinforcements the naval force which they were accumulating, repaired to England to solicit and to enforce, by his personal persuasions, the exertions which he saw to be so indispensable. Relying on the evident importance of his intended return, he did not ask leave, nor did he find it necessary, for the Admiralty cordially adopted his opinions, and ordered the immediate equipment of twelve ships of the line to accompany him on his return. Before this order could be accomplished, he was honoured by the King with a closet audience, at which his Majesty, referring to intelligence just received of the movements of De Grasse, expressed great anxiety for the fate of the West India islands. The patriotic and spirited Admiral, without hesitation, proposed that, instead of wait-

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ing for the completion of the intended reinforcements, he would instantly repair to Portsmouth, and proceed to the West Indies with such ships as he should find ready, trusting that he should soon be followed by the remainder*.

Jan. 2nd. Letter of Lord Sandwich.

At Portsmouth, he found only four ships ready, but was joined by two more off Plymouth. He had every reason to be confident that his success would not be impeded by neglect in government; for, at this port, he received a kind and cordial letter from Lord Sandwich, approving all his measures, promising acquiescence in all his demands, and concluding with the cheering, though solemn, observation, — "The "fate of this empire is in your hands, and I have no "reason to wish that it should be in any other." The eagerness of the Admiral to shew himself worthy of this confidence was checked by the elements; he was detained some time in Torbay by contrary winds and violent storms; and, during that time, had the mortification to hear of the recapture of St. Eustatia, which he considered the most disgraceful affair that had ever occurred, and, in unmeasured terms, supported however by very cogent facts, stigmatized the conduct of Colonel Cockburne†.

He sails.

During this delay, the reinforcement was completed; Rodney sailed with twelve ships of the line, and was joined, during his voyage, by two more. Opposition lavished censures on administration for permitting him to proceed directly for the West Indies with such a force, when he should have been employed, conjointly with Kempenfelt, in preventing the arrival of supplies to the enemy. Ministers, however, wisely judged that the important object of gaining a decided preponderance in the West Indies by the junction of Rodney and Hood, was not to be endangered by the precarious pursuit of inferior advantage. After a voyage of about five weeks, Rodney arrived at Barba-

19th Feb. Rodney's arrival.

* It was during this stay in London that Rodney had the opportunity of appearing in his place in the House of Commons, and refuting, in the most satisfactory manner, the allegations of Mr. Burke.

† Mundy's Life of Lord Rodney, vol. ii. p. 199.

does. He had hoped to prevent the fall of St. Christopher's; but, while sailing for its relief, met Sir Samuel Hood, who imparted the tidings of its surrender, and the retreat of De Grasse to Martinique.

State of Jamaica.

In the course of the war, in which so much political feeling had been employed, the people of Jamaica had not been altogether passive or tranquil, although they had shewn, on all occasions, a sincere attachment to the Crown, and a determination to employ their utmost means in resisting invasion. Disputes between the Governor and the Assembly had impeded the disciplining of the militia, and a duty on sugar, imposed in England, had produced a resolution in the legislative body not to grant money for forts and fortifications; but, on the appearance of imminent danger, all differences of opinion suddenly gave way, and harmony was restored. The Governor having sent a message to the House of Assembly, requiring an aid to effect certain defensive improvements at Port Royal, that body most cheerfully and liberally voted the sum required; and afterward granted an additional forty thousand pounds for fortifications; the militia system was reformed according to the Governor's desire; and those who had expressed a dread of martial law, as a greater evil than any other they were likely to encounter, now conformed in the measures dictated by public necessity. Still the available force for defence of this most valuable island was evidently incompetent and deficient*.

Proceedings of Rodney.

Admiral Rodney remained only a few hours at Barbadoes; the selfish spirit which prevailed among the inhabitants of this and other British islands, and led them, for the sake of great profits, to furnish supplies of every kind to the enemy, gave him great uneasiness; while the shameful surrender, as he considered it, not only of St. Eustatia, but of Deme-

* It is stated at 1282 regulars, with 189 black pioneers; 533 provincials, with 36 black pioneers, and 3000 militia, exclusive of those necessary to be left for defence of the defiles. Letters in the State Paper Office. Lieutenant-Governor Campbell to Lord George Germaine, 16th November, 1781. Governor Dalling to Lord George Germaine, 24th November, and Lieutenant-Governor Campbell, 23rd December, same year, and 6th March, 1782.

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rary, St. Christopher's, and other possessions, filled him with indignation. On his junction with Sir Samuel Hood, the British admiral had under his command at Gros-Islet Bay, in St. Lucie, thirty-six ships of the line, beside frigates, manned with 21,608 seamen; but their condition in respect of provisions was very bad, Sir Samuel Hood's division having been for some time utterly unprovided with bread. In prospect of the intended conquests, which were to have extended from Jamaica to Barbadoes, the French and Spaniards had accumulated all the force they could muster; Count de Grasse and the Marquis de Bouillé had, at Martinique, thirty-three ships of the line, two of fifty guns, and many frigates, with a numerous land force; while Don Bernardo de Galvez was waiting at Cape François, in hopes of a junction which would have made their armament amount to nearly fifty ships of the line, with twenty thousand troops. So confident, it is said, were the Spaniards of success, that, before he sailed from the Havannah, Galvez was addressed in council as Governor of Jamaica.

His fleet.

Vast preparation of France.

As it was the duty of the French admiral to avoid any conflict before his union with the Spaniards should give him an irresistible superiority of force, so patriotism, duty, and undaunted bravery, impelled the British commander to seek, and, even if circumstances should present some disadvantages, to force an encounter. Some days were spent in obtaining water, distributing stores, and making other judicious arrangements, when, by a signal through a chain of frigates stationed between St. Lucie and Martinique, he learned that the French admiral had unmoored, and was proceeding to sea. His anchors were immediately hoisted, and in little more than two hours the fleet was under weigh, standing toward the French. On the following morning, the van and centre were within cannon shot of the enemy's rear; but a sharp cannonade which ensued, proved partial and indecisive, from the falling of the wind, and the becalming of a great portion of the fleet under the highlands of Dominica. In the course of the two next days the French kept far to windward, and

Partial actions.

8th April.

9th.

10th and 11th.

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would probably have escaped, but for a movement they made to save one of their ships, which, through an accident, had dropped to leeward.

12th. Great victory.

Through this casualty, the British admiral had the inexpressible satisfaction, at day break, to discover himself in a situation to weather a large part of the enemy's fleet, which was now reduced to thirty ships, two having been damaged in action, and the one beforementioned being crippled by accident. The line of battle was formed in an incredibly short time, the officers of the fleet having acquired the utmost expertness in naval evolutions in the course of the last two years' practice on this station. At half past seven in the morning, the action was began. The two fleets met on opposite tacks, and, there being little wind, the British ships ranged slowly along, and those under the lee of the enemy's line delivered a tremendous fire, which the French received, and returned with firmness. At noon, Sir George Rodney, in the Formidable, having passed the Ville de Paris, the Count de Grasse's ship, and her second, so close as to be almost in contact, and having made a visible impression on them, by a quick and well-directed fire, stood athwart the enemy's line, between the second and third ships, astern the Ville de Paris, followed and nobly supported by the Duke, Namur, and Canada; the rest of his division coming up in succession. The Formidable wore round; and a signal being made for the van division under Admiral Drake to tack, the British fleet thus gained the wind, and stood upon the same tack with the enemy. By this bold manœuvre the French line was broken, separated, and thrown into confusion*: it decided the fate of the day, although it did not end the conflict. The rear of the British fleet, being becalmed, did not for some time get into action, and at last was favoured only by a slight breeze. The French ships being crowded with men, the carnage

* This manœuvre was considered to be new, and much discussion has arisen whether or not the thought originated with the brave admiral who so well executed at. From the statements made and collected by General Mundy, in relating this great event, it is fair to conclude that Rodney has a just claim to the invention. Life of Rodney, vol. ii. p. 294.

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was prodigious. Count de Grasse, with his own, and the other ships in the centre, withstood till evening all the efforts of the various ships that attacked him. At length, Captain Cornwallis of the Canada, of seventy-four guns, having compelled the Hector of equal force to strike, left her to be taken possession of by a frigate, and assailed the Ville de Paris, which in two hours he reduced almost to a wreck: still the French admiral refused to surrender, when, toward sun-set, Sir Samuel Hood in the Barfleur, who had hitherto been becalmed, arriving, and pouring in a destructive fire, he yielded in ten minutes, after continuing his exertions till only three men were left unhurt on the upper deck, of whom himself was one. Beside the Ville de Paris, the Hector, the Cæsar, and the Glorieux of seventy-four guns, and the Ardent of sixty-four, were taken, and the Diadem, another seventy-four, was sunk by a single broadside from the Formidable. Night terminated the engagement, when the British admiral collected his fleet, and took measures for securing the prizes. Unfortunately the Cæsar blew up in the night, owing to the licentious conduct of an English seaman; and a lieutenant and fifty British sailors, with about four hundred prisoners, perished. The Ville de Paris was freighted with thirty-six chests of money, destined for the pay and subsistence of the troops in the designed attack on Jamaica; and it seems to have been singularly providential, that the whole train of artillery, with the battering cannon and travelling carriages meant for that expedition, were on board the captured vessels*.

The loss of men sustained by the British fleet, in the actions of the ninth and twelfth of April, amounted only to two hundred and thirty-seven killed, and seven hundred and sixty wounded; while that of the enemy

* The Ville de Paris was the largest ship in the French King's service; she was a present from the city of Paris to Louis XV; and no expense was spared to render the gift worthy both of the city and the monarch. Her building and fitting for sea are said to have cost a hundred and seventy-six thousand pounds sterling. Before she was dispatched on this service (4th Sept. 1781), she was said not to be sea-worthy, unless she underwent a complete careening; but in the eagerness of the French Government, this was omitted.

was computed at three thousand slain, and more than six thousand wounded. The French ships that escaped were almost reduced to wrecks. The British line consisted of thirty-six, and the French line of thirty-two ships: but six vessels of Hood's division, from the scantiness of the wind, never could be brought into the general action, and the disparity in number of vessels was more than compensated by the size of the French ships, and their greater weight of metal. It was calculated that, from the greater power of their lower deck batteries, the total weight of a broadside of the French fleet exceeded one from ours by four thousand three hundred and ninety-six pounds. The difference in the number of men was still more considerable; the French always employing a greater complement than the English to the same tonnage, and having, besides, the assistance of a large body of land forces. The victory was ascribed to the superior bravery of the British seamen, most conspicuously displayed in close action.

Four of the ships which escaped took refuge in the Dutch island of Curaçao; but the remainder, under Bougainville and Vaudreuil, steered for Cape François. Sir Samuel Hood afterward captured the Jason and the Caton of seventy-four guns, and two frigates, in the Mona passage, between Hispaniola and Porto Rico. Rodney, after an unsuccessful search for the fugitive enemy, repaired to Jamaica, where he was hailed with enthusiastic exultation and the gratitude due to a deliverer*.

19th April.

Conduct of Ministers toward Rodney.

In all respects, this glorious achievement, so honourable and beneficial to the country, was injurious to the credit and popularity of administration. Whether it arose from personal dislike, or from resentment at his having been countenanced by the King and Lord Sandwich, their censures of him had always been un-

* For all the above particulars, I have consulted the Histories, Gazettes, and official publications, and Beatson's Naval and Military Memoirs, but have principally relied on Mundy's Life of Lord Rodney, vol. ii. p. 167, et seqq. and the work of Sir Gilbert Blane, the friend and medical adviser of the admiral, who was present during the action, intitled "Select dissertations on subjects of medi- "cal science," p. 72. The whole passage is extracted by General Mundy.

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sparing, unfeeling, and unjust. For the first six weeks after their accession to office, no letter to the commanding officer on a station and a service so important, was sent to express civility, impart instruction, or require information*. Their first notice of him was by a letter which announced his recall, without assigning any reason, either public or personal, without an expression either of civility or regret: upon the whole, in a manner that no gentleman could have expected from a board of gentlemen; no naval officer from a body over which a naval officer presided†.

His recall.

Sensation of the public.

Admiral Pigot had not left London many days before the news of Rodney's victory arrived. Ministers, sensible of the error they had committed, dispatched, with extraordinary speed, a courier, hoping to prevent the departure of their appointed admiral; but he arrived too late‡. The intelligence acted on the public like a reviving cordial; unbounded joy and exultation were manifested in every form. A general illumination, perfectly spontaneous, neither commanded by authority nor enforced by faction, testified the satisfaction of the metropolis, and festivals and rejoicings took place in various parts of the kingdom. Proportioned to this well-merited expression of national joy at the rescue of most important colonies from the grasp of the enemy, was that of indignation at the insult offered to the commander by whom so much was achieved. The unjust invectives which had been uttered against him were recalled to recollection; and, considering by whom the removal of Rodney had been promoted, comparisons were instituted, whether justly or not, between him and the First Lord of the Admiralty. The 27th of

* Mundy, vol. ii, p. 324.

† The following is the letter:

SIR, *Admiralty Office, May* 1, 1782.

Lord Viscount Keppel having signified his Majesty's pleasure that Hugh Pigot, Esq. Admiral of the Blue, be appointed to relieve you in the command of his Majesty's ships at Barbadoes and the Leeward Islands, I am commanded by my lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to acquaint you therewith, and that he will immediately proceed thither, for that purpose, in his Majesty's ship the Jupiter.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

PHILIP STEPHENS.

‡ Mundy, vol. ii, p. 307; Beatson, vol. v. p. 480.

July was contrasted with the 12th of April, in every form that malice could supply.

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Under these mortifying circumstances, duty cast upon ministers the task of obtaining honours and rewards for the popular naval victor. 17th May.

Motions of thanks and honours.

Lord Keppel moved, in the House of Lords, three resolutions, thanking the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Samuel Hood, Admiral Drake, Commodore Affleck, Sir Charles Douglas and the other officers and commanders of the fleet; and approving the conduct of the seamen, marines, and troops. An altercation arose, not from opposition to the motion, for in that all concurred, but from the eager desire of the late administration to extort from their successors higher encomiums and greater honours than they were willing to bestow. Rodney's victory was extolled above that of Lord Hawke; the report of an intended peerage was considered not sufficiently explicit; his services would be inadequately rewarded with a rank inferior to that of viscount or earl. "My own ancestor," Lord Sandwich observed, "was for his services made an earl, and "master of the wardrobe for three lives; and surely "what Sir George Rodney had done, merited at least "an earldom, with an annuity of two or three thou- "sand pounds annexed to it: his last action alone "deserved as much." The ministry were also severely reproached for his intended recall. On each of these points many sharp retorts were used on both sides; and Lord Keppel evaded an avowal of the intention to remove the popular commander, by stating that no evidence of the fact existed; it was a vague report, and therefore improperly introduced in debate.

22nd.

In the House of Commons, Mr. Fox moved thanks to Sir George Rodney alone, but, on the suggestion of Lord North, added the flag officers, acknowledging, with frank politeness, his obligation to the ex-minister for the correction, and for his moderation in leaving the amendment to the servants of the Crown. In answer to a question from Mr. Rolle, with characteristic firmness, he stated, without hesitation or circumlocution, that Rodney was superseded. Mr. Rolle

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founded on this avowal two motions, affirming and censuring the change of the commanders. Mr. Fox said, the resolution to recall the Admiral had been adopted before the intelligence of the late glorious victory arrived; his conduct at St. Eustatia had excited prejudices, and made the planters his enemies; but his newly-acquired glory was sufficient to balance his former demerits, and he was willing to bury in oblivion all inquiries, unless provoked by the intemperate zeal of the Admiral's friends. Mr. Burke adopted the same sentiments, observing, that if there was a bald spot on the head of Rodney, he had no objection to cover it with laurels. These applauses, mixed with threats, occasioned severe animadversions in the House, and were warmly resented by the public. Mr. Rolle's first motion was, however, evaded by the previous question,

23rd May.

and his second withdrawn. A monument was voted in commemoration of Captains Bayne, Blair, and Lord Robert Manners*, who were slain in the late actions. Sir George Rodney obtained a pension of two thousand pounds, and was created a Baron of Great Britain†; Sir Samuel Hood received the same rank in the Irish peerage; and Admiral Drake and Commodore Affleck were made baronets.

Proceedings in the West Indies.

After the great event of the 12th of April, the war was not vigorously prosecuted in the West Indies. Don Juan Manuel de Cagigal, Governor of Cuba, with

6th May.

three frigates and sixty sail of transports, conveying two thousand five hundred troops and as many seamen,

* This young nobleman, son of the Marquis of Granby and brother of the Duke of Rutland, was commander of the Resolution of seventy-four guns. His leg was shot off, and he received other wounds: his recovery was hoped, but his death was produced by a locked jaw, while on his passage to England.

† To close, at once, the enumeration of the acknowledgments so deservedly made to this truly illustrious Admiral, it may be added, that in 1793, after his death, the pension of two thousand pounds was annexed to his title for ever, and in 1806 an addition of one thousand pounds per annum was, on the motion of Lord Grenville, granted to his grandson. In his own person Rodney received every possible mark of personal gratitude and affection. The cities of London, Edinburgh, and Cork, and the borough of Huntingdon, presented him with their freedoms in gold boxes, and he also was made a freeman of Liverpool, Northampton, Exeter, Yarmouth, Poole, Bristol, Dundee, Leicester, and Winchester. Many other marks of respect were paid to him in England, and, in addition to other acknowledgments, the legislature of Jamaica voted one thousand pounds for a statue to commemorate their deliverance through his means.—Mundy, vol. ii. pp. 266, 331, 380. After the peace, the Empress of Russia offered him the highest rank in her naval service; but it was declined.

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fell suddenly on the Bahama Islands, where Lieutenant-Colonel Maxwell, the governor, had only a garrison of a hundred and seventy invalids. The conquest was achieved without bloodshed, and the captor granted liberal terms of capitulation.

The Bahamas taken. 8th.

A squadron also sailed from Cape François, consisting of a seventy-four and two frigates of thirty-six guns, under the command of the since celebrated La Perouse, which, after encountering great difficulties, and working a perilous passage through the ice, destroyed some defenceless settlements on Hudson's, Haye's, and Nelson's rivers.

31st May. Destruction of settlements.

8th, 11th, 21st.

The English captured some forts on the Musquito shore from the Spaniards, and took from the Dutch, Acra, on the coast of Africa, with four other forts.

July. Captures by the English.

In expectation, probably, of events far different from those which really occurred, the French ministers delayed, rather than promoted, the progress of negotiation. Had success crowned their arms, their intrigues would have left England helpless at their mercy. They availed themselves of the frankness of the British administration to injure their character. Prince Kaunitz spoke with haughty indignation of the contempt shewn to the mediating powers by commencing a direct negotiation; derided the British Cabinet for begging peace at every door; refused to admit that France was equally blameable for accepting, as England for making, such overtures, and expressed no satisfaction at the late glorious victory.

May. Slow progress of negotiation.

If jealousy of the naval power of Great Britain occasioned this indifference, the ministry employed the most effectual means to remove it, by a prompt declaration that the late events made no alteration in their desire for peace, or in the terms proposed as a basis. France, however, still placing sanguine reliance on exertions they had prepared to make in the East Indies and before Gibraltar, sought to protract its treaty by artifice, without precluding themselves from the means of advancing in it, should their hopes be frustrated. M. De Vergennes remitted, through Mr. Grenville, a paper, approving the peace of Paris as the basis of

4th June.

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negotiation, but proposing so many and such vague exceptions, relative to all quarters of the globe, that almost every trace of that treaty was obliterated*.

Effect of Rodney's victory in France.

Still the failure in the West Indies was felt with deep and bitter regret. For the hope of acquiring the colonies, and annihilating the maritime ascendancy of Great Britain, were substituted boasts and threats, vehement declarations, and impracticable professions.

30th May.

To encourage the people, it was given out that the King had treated the intelligence lightly, saying, "Well, the English have taken five of my ships: I "will immediately have fifteen built in their stead, "and the event shall not make me more yielding in a

June 8th.

"treaty for peace." It was asserted that the Prince of Condé, for the estates of Brittany, the Count D'Artois, and Monsieur, had each offered to government a ship of a hundred and ten guns; that the trading corporations of Paris were subscribing with enthusiasm for one of a hundred and twenty; that Bordeaux, Marseilles, the country, and the great towns, were vying with each other in promises, and that a collection would be made sufficient for the building of twenty first-rate vessels†. Such splendid promises from a people situated as the French were, might shew the wishes, but not the intentions or the powers of those who made them.

Treatment of De Grasse.

De Grasse had a melancholy experience of the deep sensation which his disaster had caused. His gallant victor treated him with all the consideration due from a brave man to a brave, though vanquished enemy. In Jamaica, and when he landed on the British shore, all respect and attention were paid him; but in France his valour and his services produced no such return: his ill fortune weighed down all his claims to favour and regard; he was disgraced and banished from the court‡, and an insulting wish was expressed that D'Estaing had commanded in his stead§. So inflamed

* For all the particulars relative to this negotiation, I have consulted the official correspondence.

† State Papers of the dates in the margin. Another still more pompous boast, attributed to the French King, is in Mundy, vol. ii. p. 254.

‡ Mundy, vol. ii. p. 290, 380.

§ Memoirs of Dr. Franklin, vol. ii. p. 371.

was the public spite on this occasion, that the Marechal De Biron was violently reproached, and even threatened by the mob of Paris, for having by his generosity unchained the noble animal, the object of their hatred and their fear*.

War in India.

To tranquillize the public mind respecting the late calamity, the French Government circulated a report that the power of England was destroyed in India, and that Hyder Alley had taken Madras. The details of events in that quarter will appear in a future page, but such only are recorded here as particularly affected the belligerent powers, and influenced them in the negotiation for peace.

1778. 25th April. Capture of French settlements. July.

When the hostility of France became certain, the East India Company prudently secured the safety of their own settlements by attacking those of the enemy. The factories of Chandernagore, Yanam, Carical, and Masulipatam, with several ships in the Ganges, and on the coast of Coromandel, were taken in the beginning of the contest; and ten thousand five hundred troops, of whom fifteen hundred were Europeans, were detached from Madras, under the command of the brave and experienced Major Hector Munro, to form the siege of Pondicherry.

August. Siege of Pondicherry.

Action between Vernon and Tronjolly. 10th August.

While operations were slowly proceeding by land, a sea force, under Sir Edward Vernon, effected a blockade by sea, after a slight and indecisive engagement with M. De Tronjolly, who commanded a French squadron of superior strength, but cautiously avoided a close encounter. The defence of the fortress was ably and resolutely maintained by M. De Bellecombe, governor of the town, and Commandant-General of all the French settlements in India. His garrison consisted of nine hundred Europeans, and two thousand one hundred natives; and his loss in killed was nearly equal to that of the besiegers. To save the town from a storm, he was obliged to capitulate, and obtained terms, in which the military pride and personal feelings of the garrison were attentively con-

16th October. Pondicherry taken.

* Mundy, vol. i. p. 182.

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sidered. The inhabitants were also allowed great and unusual privileges, which, on a subsequent occasion, they did not hesitate ungratefully to turn against the victors.

Sentiments of Hyder Ally.

The French were always favoured by Hyder Ally, and the war in which he was engaged with the Mahrattas alone prevented him from attempting to

Mahé taken.

raise the siege of Pondicherry. In the ensuing year, the settlement of Mahé, the last possession of the French, was captured, notwithstanding Hyder's remonstrances, who alleged that all foreigners holding factories under his dominion were entitled to his pro-

War with the natives.

tection. This annihilation of the power of France in India was peculiarly auspicious, at a moment when the British possessions were exposed to imminent danger from a combination of Hyder Ally with the Mahrattas and other native potentates, who formed a general

Efforts of France.

scheme for our expulsion from India. The French, not unmindful of the rising storm, sent great reinforcements to their settlements in Africa, hoping to co-

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operate with the powers of India against the English; and Hyder Ally, relying on their assistance, and an immense army which he had collected, commenced war in the Carnatic; and, though disappointed in the expected co-operation, the treachery of the favoured inhabitants of Pondicherry rendered some service to his cause, by distracting the attention and dividing the efforts of the British government.

1781. War with Holland. Secret Expedition.

The war with Holland gave a more active impulse to European hostility. A secret expedition was equipped, the fleet being commanded by Commodore Johnstone, the land forces by General Meadows, to reduce the Cape of Good Hope. Anxious for the safety of that settlement, and of Ceylon, and to prepare the success of their projected operations in India, the French dispatched a frigate to communicate intelligence, and concert operations with the Dutch Governors and the Commander of the French fleet at the Isle of France. They sent from Brest two powerful squadrons, comprising a portion of De Grasse's fleet, under M. De Suffrein, with directions not to separate until in

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the latitude of Madeira, that the English might be deceived as to the real object of their destination. While Commodore Johnstone was victualling and watering at Port Praya, in the Cape de Verd islands, belonging to Portugal, a neutral power, he was suddenly attacked by the French. The English, although unexpectedly assailed, combated with characteristic spirit, and compelled the enemy to retire with disgrace and disappointment; but they gained the advantage of saving the Cape of Good Hope.

16th April. Commodore Johnstone attacked by De Suffrein.

By the accidental capture of a Dutch East Indiaman, the Commodore acquired intelligence that five valuable ships were lying in Saldanha Bay. On his approach, they were set on fire; but the flames being extinguished, four were taken, and the Middleburgh alone destroyed.

June. Five Dutch East-indiamen taken.

July.

An expedition hastily formed from Fort Marlborough, on the coast of Sumatra, reduced all the Dutch settlements on that island; Negapatam, in the Tanjore country, was taken, after an active siege, by Sir Hector Munro; and, early in the ensuing year, Sir Edward Hughes, with a small detachment of sepoys and artillerymen, stormed the fort of Trincomalé, on the island of Ceylon.

August. Negapatam and other places taken. 21st Oct. to 12th Nov. Jan. 1782.

The arrival of De Suffrein, and the indefatigable exertions of the French, in sending out reinforcements to their African settlements, afforded flattering hopes of crushing the British power. On the departure of Commodore Johnstone for Europe, his squadron was committed to Captain Alms, when a tempest separated and disabled several ships, and the Hannibal, of fifty guns, fell into the hands of the enemy. The remainder, consisting of the Hero, of seventy-four, the Monmouth, of sixty-four, and the Isis, of fifty guns, joined Sir Edward Hughes in the open road of Madras. M. De Suffrein, unapprized of their arrival, bore down to attack the English fleet, with twelve sail of the line, six frigates, and eight large transports; but, perceiving their augmented force, stood out to sea, and Admiral Hughes recaptured five English, and took the Lauriston, a French transport of thirteen hundred tons

Arrival of the English squadron.

8th Feb. 15th Feb. Sir Edward Hughes takes six transports. 16th Feb.

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burthen, with a train of artillery, and a large quantity of military stores; thus, by one fortunate stroke, rendering abortive the projects for assisting Hyder Ally.

His first engagement with De Suffrein.

The efforts of De Suffrein to protect his convoy produced an engagement, which was distinguished only by the gallantry with which five English ships, separated from the rest by the weather, repelled the attack of the whole fleet. After repairing his damaged vessels, and being reinforced by two more from England, Sir Edward Hughes again encountered the French admiral on the same day that Rodney gained unfading laurels in the West Indies. This conflict was equally honourable, but less decisive, no ship being captured on either side, and both fleets were compelled to put into port for repairs.

12th April. His second engagement.

Their effects.

Although these engagements produced no accession to the force of either party at sea, they contributed to make Hyder Ally desirous of peace, as his patience was exhaused by awaiting the delusive promises of France, and his notions of British superiority greatly enhanced by the display of valour and skill in such disproportioned encounters. The French strained every nerve to efface these impressions, by strengthening their force at Cuddalore; while the fleet, repaired, revictualled, newly manned, and augmented, again challenged the British commander to an encounter. Sir Edward Hughes, though inferior in numbers, did not decline the engagement, which was, for the first time, general, and a complete victory was almost gained, when a sudden squall saved the defeated enemy, and enabled them to effect a retreat. The Sévère, a French sixty-four, had struck her colours to the Sultan; but, taking advantage of the change of wind, treacherously fired a broadside into the English ship, and rejoined the French fleet without colours flying. This violation of the laws of war was feebly vindicated by De Suffrein, and subsequently by the French government.

6th July. Third engagement.

August. Trincomalé recaptured.

Both fleets were again reinforced, and the French, retaining a considerable superiority, recaptured Trinco-

malé*. Sir Edward Hughes made great exertions for the relief of the fortress, but arrived too late; he fought, however, another engagement with the French admiral; the superior skill of the British fleet more than counterpoised the difference of force; the action was unusually bloody, and De Suffrein again owed his safety to flight; he broke six of his captains and sent them prisoners to Mauritius.

1782. 3rd Sept. Fourth engagement.

No further transaction of moment occurred between the European powers during the remainder of the year, and their next campaign was chiefly employed in the siege of Cuddalore, which was bravely defended by the Marquis De Bussy, and assailed with great skill and valour by General Stuart. Although, at this time, the English fleet was reduced to a miserable condition by the scurvy, Sir Edward Hughes did not decline a fifth and last encounter with his old antagonist; it was fought at a great distance, and, like the preceding, terminated without a capture†.

Siege of Cuddalore.

1783. 25th June. 20th June. Fifth engagement.

The united enemies of Great Britain threatened, by a combination of their marine forces in Europe, to ruin commerce and desolate the country. But these menaces, however loudly sounded, were rendered abortive by the vigilance and valour of our naval commanders, in preventing the junction of the hostile squadrons. Admiral Barrington, having sailed from Portsmouth with twelve ships of the line, met the French fleet at a small distance from Ushant, commenced a chase, and took twelve transports, with a great number of troops. Captain Jervis, afterward Earl St. Vincent, in the Foudroyant, of seventy-four guns, encountered Le Pegase, of equal force; and, after a spirited, though short engagement, compelled her to strike. The most remarkable circumstance of the action was the disparity of loss; the French having more than eighty men killed, while the Foudroyant

Naval exertions in Europe.

13th April. 1782. Sundry captures.

* The taking and recapture of this fort are but briefly noticed here; but the details are worthy of perusal, and may be found in Captain Percival's Account of Ceylon, p. 49.

† For these transactions, I have consulted the Gazettes, Narratives of Officers, Memoirs of the War in Asia, and Beatson's Naval and Military Memoirs, vol. v. pp. 313, 561.

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had only three or four wounded, and not one slain. The prize, reduced to a mere wreck, was committed to the charge of Captain Maitland of the Queen, who, in conducting her to England, captured the Actionnaire, a sixty-four, but armed *en flute*, conveying a great quantity of naval and ordnance stores, and several chests of money. Captain Jervis was rewarded with the order of the Bath.

29th May. 1782. The Dutch confined in port.

Admiral Barrington being obliged by stress of weather to return to port, Admiral Kempenfelt, with nine sail of the line, repaired to the station he had quitted, while Lord Howe, with a squadron of twelve sail, terrified the Dutch into a relinquishment of their designs on the Baltic and northern trade of Great Britain.

Junction of the French and Spanish fleets.

Meanwhile, De Guichen had formed a junction at Cadiz with the Spanish fleet, under Don Louis De Cordova; their united squadron, amounting to twenty-five sail of the line, occupied the chops of the Channel, having, in their cruize, captured eighteen vessels of the outward-bound Quebec and Newfoundland fleets: but, Lord Howe being returned from his expedition against the Dutch, accomplished, with only twelve sail of the line, the arduous task of protecting the homeward-bound Jamaica trade; and thus an inferior naval force baffled all the projects of such a mighty combination.

Capture of Quebec and Newfoundland fleets. Trade protected by Lord Howe.

Fate of Rodney's prizes.

But what the enemy could not effect to the prejudice of the British marine, the elements in their unsparing fury accomplished. Some of the great prizes made by Rodney and Hood on the twelfth and nineteenth of April, were dispatched with English ships to convoy the homeward-bound trade. On this fleet fell the severest rigours of one of the most tempestuous summers ever experienced. The Ville de Paris, Centaur, Glorieux, Hector, and Ramillies, foundered under different circumstances, and the merchant vessels sustained a proportionate damage. The horror of these misfortunes was aggravated by an accident at home, which roused the sympathies of the nation by a resistless appeal. Lord Howe, returning from his

20th June.

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well-conducted cruize against the united fleets, urged the equipment, with the utmost celerity, of a squadron for relief of Gibraltar. The Royal George, of a hundred and eight guns, destined for this service, was placed in an inclined position for the purpose of stopping a leak, when a sudden squall of wind entirely overset her, and buried in the ocean the brave veteran, Admiral Kempenfelt, and nearly a thousand sailors, marines, women and children. A victualler, which lay alongside, was swallowed up in the vortex occasioned by the submersion of so large a body, and it was some time before the small craft could be employed in assisting those who escaped the general calamity. Not more than three hundred were saved, and the national humanity was honourably displayed in an ample subscription for the relatives of those who perished.

29th Aug. Loss of the Royal George.

Having so distinctly renounced all claims of advantage from Rodney's victory, none could be expected to arise from the events in India, as the war with the natives still raged, and its final issue was uncertain. The moderation of England gave force to the over-weening desires of the adverse party.

Progress of the negotiation.

Dr. Franklin, who, jointly with Mr. Jay, but often with different views, conducted the negotiation on behalf of America, was tenacious and unbending. He remembered, with rancour, every thing he had experienced which was calculated to give offence, and mingled with his zeal for the interests of his country, and his predilection for France, a passionate resentment of what he considered personal affronts*. The instructions to their commissioners for treating of peace contained a clause, which, although sanctioned by a large majority of Congress, was extremely distasteful to others, as a dereliction of national dignity; "that "the Commissioners should undertake nothing in the "negotiation without the knowledge and concur- "rence of the French cabinet, and ultimately govern

America.

* A specimen may be seen in his letter to Mr. David Hartley (Feb. 16, 1782), where he refers to the answer given by Lord Stormont to an application relative to an exchange of prisoners. (Ante, vol. ii. p. 505.) Franklin's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 282.

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"themselves by their advice and opinion." This direction was treated as an act of abject prostration, serving to shew the near alliance between pride and meanness, and to prove that they who had sufficient humility to beg a paltry pittance at the hands of any and every sovereign, would always be ready to pay the prices which vanity should demand from the vain*.

Had Franklin not been restrained, or more probably indulged, by this restriction; had he kept in view nothing but the true interests of his own country, those interests which, in the beginning of the war, and in all her answers to offers of mediation, France declared to be her only object in pursuing it, the time was come when America might have concluded an advantageous peace with the mother-country. Her independence, without a treaty, had been conceded, both in form and effect: in form by the recent statute, and the terms in which the powers of the commissioners were expressed; in effect, by the establishment of a treaty, the exchange of prisoners, and other acts utterly inconsistent with any state in which dependence can be supposed to exist. From whatever causes it arose, Dr. Franklin entertained some grossly erroneous notions of the state and powers of Great Britain. He ascribed these opinions to the conversations of Mr. Oswald, whom he considered as speaking the sentiments of Lord Shelburne, and preferred him to Mr. Grenville, who he thought declared those of Mr. Fox†. From conversations with Mr. Oswald, he imagined that England was not void of money; but government could only avoid the difficulty of imposing new taxes to raise it, by shutting the Exchequer, stopping payment of the interest of the public funds, and applying the money to the support of the war. The self-importance of his remark on this supposed or misapprehended disclosure is remarkable. "I made no answer," he says; "for I "did not desire to discourage their stopping pay- "ment, which I considered as cutting the throat of

* Letter from Governor Morris to Mr. Jay. Memoirs, vol. i. p. 237.
† Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 371.

" their public credit, and a means of adding fresh ex-
" asperation against them with the neighbouring na-
" tions*." If Mr. Oswald really uttered such observations as are ascribed to him, it could only be with a view to learn the private sentiments of the American; and he succeeded so far as to obtain from him a distinct statement of the terms which America would expect on the conclusion of a peace. These were stated by Franklin in conversation, from a written paper, which he would not permit to be copied. It was divided under two heads,—necessary, and advisable. The first comprized—1, perfect independence, and the withdrawing of all British troops; 2, a settlement of boundaries; 3, confinement of the boundaries of Canada to what they were before the last act of parliament, or even at a more recent period; and 4, Freedom of fishing on the banks of Newfoundland, not for whales alone, but all other species. The measures stated as advisable were—1, That England should offer something to relieve those who had suffered by scalping and burning parties; lives indeed could not be restored, but villages and houses might be rebuilt, and the cost would not exceed five or six hundred thousand pounds; 2, An acknowledgment, by act of Parliament or other public declaration, that Great Britain had done wrong in distressing those countries; 3, That American ships should be received and have the same privileges in Great Britain and Ireland as those of our own country, with a mutual concession on the part of America; and 4, That we should voluntarily resign to the United States all Canada and Nova Scotia. In support of this last proposition, he alleged that their territory and that of the desired country touched each other in a long-extended frontier, and that the American settlers in those parts, being far removed from the eye and control of their respective governments, were therefore the more bold in committing offences against their neighbours, and were always occasioning complaints, and furnishing matter for fresh discussions and differences. To ren-

April.

* Same, pp. 316, 357.

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der these extravagant proposals in some degree endurable, he took up the term reconciliation which had been used in Parliament, called it a sweet word, implying much more than peace, expressed great friendship toward England, and a hope that, if differences could be settled in the manner he proposed, not only a beneficial intercourse, but a federal union, between the countries might be the result*.

July 5.

When the death of the Marquis of Rockingham occasioned the change of administration in England, Mr. Grenville retired from his mission in Paris, and Mr. Oswald received a commission, nominating him, jointly with Mr. Fitzherbert, plenipotentiary to treat for peace; and it was officially declared that the desire of that event would remain unaltered.

France.

Notwithstanding this declaration, and the known failure of two of the projects for humbling or destroying Great Britain, the spirit of procrastination hung over the treaty. The ambition and intrigues of France operated in every possible device and contrivance. Her ministers advanced claims and pretensions which could not be supposed to have any other tendency than that of prolonging the negotiation. In addition to their claims in various parts of the world, they went back to a period preceding the last war, and required a reparation for ships which, as they said, had been taken and detained before the declaration of hostilities, contrary to the law of nations; and when required to make some propositions for peace, M. De Vergennes answered evasively, that, as there were four nations engaged in war against Great Britain, they could not, until they knew each other's minds, be prepared with propositions; but our court, being alone and without allies, knowing its own mind, could express it immediately, and was therefore expected to make propositions†.

These pretences, feeble and futile as they were, would not, by their own force, have carried with them

* Franklin's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 317. It is not easy to fix a precise date to this conversation; it would appear, from this authority, that it took place in the latter part of April; but the document in the State Paper Office, in which it is detailed, is of the 10th of July.

† Franklin, vol. ii. p. 316.

much conviction. They were advanced at an early period of the negotiation, but were, in fact, employed only as means to gain time for the operation of an intrigue more deeply designed than the French government could venture to disclose. In embracing the cause of the Americans, France had nothing in view but the ruin, or at least the essential diminution, of British greatness. If America were made independent of England, it was at least hoped that she should become, in some considerable degree, dependent on France. To this had tended various proposals, by La Fayette and others, for the reconquest of Canada; a measure which the good sense of the American people, aided by their hatred of the French, had always led them to resist. From this desire, and the management of a secret intrigue, proceeded the direction to the American commissioners to act under the advice of the French Court. Dr. Franklin, who was now become French at heart, approved, if he did not suggest, this instruction; and thus, when Mr. Oswald produced only limited powers to treat with the thirteen colonies, or any of them, and M. De Vergennes pronounced them sufficient, he professed himself satisfied, and he expresses entire approbation of the French minister's evasive answer on the subject of peace; but Mr. Jay, his joint commissioner, uninfluenced by such sentiments, insisted, and effectually in the end, that the independence of America should be fully and explicitly recognized, not as the condition, but the basis, of a treaty. If, in a general view, the opinion of De Vergennes, that, by entering into treaties with the United States, the mother-country did essentially recognize their independence, Mr. Jay discerned, or obtained information, that the French minister had actually dispatched a secret envoy to London to prevent the entire, unbounded concession; but our ministers listened to the better reasons advanced by Mr. Jay's agent, and conformed to his desire.

A further indication of the project of the French government to make America dependent on, although not subject to, them, appeared in an attempt to deprive

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them of an immense western territory, of the navigation of the Mississippi, and of the fisheries, except on their own coasts. For this purpose, it was proposed to establish what was called a conciliatory line between the United States and Spain; to begin from the division of East and West Florida; to run thence to Fort Toulouse on the river Alabama; thence by different courses to Cumberland River; and down the Cumberland to the Ohio; and to the westward of this line the United States were to have no pretensions. By terms equally precise they were to be excluded from the navigation of the Mississippi. Thus were De Vergennes and Montmorin contriving to hinder the United States from acquiring political stability and strength*.

Holland and Spain. July 6th.

Holland, having been hitherto entirely overlooked and neglected, obtained, on an application to De Vergennes, permission to be included as a negotiating party; and Spain had as yet advanced no pretensions beyond the restitution of Gibraltar, to the siege of which fortress the whole attention of the belligerent powers, and of Europe, was now directed.

* Dispatch of Mr. Pickering, the American Secretary of State, to Mr. Pinckney, the Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States in Paris, 10th January, 1797. Published in a Collection called Actes et Mémoires concernant les negociations, qui ont en lieu entre la France et les États Unis de l'Amerique, tom. i. p. 285.

CHAPTER THE FORTY-EIGHTH.

1781—1782.

Lord Howe sails to relieve Gibraltar.—Progress of the Siege.—Partial supply.—De Crillon commands.—Construction of floating batteries.—Preparations for defence.—Attack by land.—Naval force of the enemy.—Land force.—Force of the Garrison.—Grand attack.—Destruction of the floating batteries.—Humane exertions of Captain Curtis.—Mortification of the enemy.—Public honours to the Garrison.—Operations of the combined fleets—and of Lord Howe.—Progress of Negotiation.—America.—The Loyalists.—France, Spain, and Holland.—Separate articles agreed on with America.—Information communicated to the public.—State of Parties.—Meeting of Parliament.—King's Speech.—Debate on the Address.—In the House of Lords.—On the report.—Christmas recess.

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1781. 11th Sept. Lord Howe sails to relieve Gibraltar.

THE loss of the Royal George did not impede the preparations for the relief of Gibraltar. A fleet left Spithead under the command of Lord Howe, consisting of thirty-four sail of the line, six frigates, and three fire ships, with store ships under convoy, which carried the number of his armament to one hundred and eighty-three. Under his command were Vice-Admirals Barrington and Millbank, Rear-Admirals Hood and Hughes, and Commodore Hotham.

Progress of the siege.

For some days after the destruction of their works by the well-judged sortie in 1781, the Spaniards did not even attempt to extinguish the smoking ruins, but seemed stupified by surprise. Recovering from their consternation, they laboured with increasing assiduity, and again constructed formidable approaches. The bombardment continued with various degrees of vigour, and was answered by corresponding efforts from the

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garrison; but little effect was produced, and not much interest excited. This monotony was occasionally relieved by the arrival of succours from Minorca, Leghorn, Lisbon, and England. One aid, more important than the rest, was received in the Vernon, ordnance store ship, which brought Lieutenant-Colonel Gladstanes, with upward of one hundred recruits, and materials for constructing twelve additional gun-boats, an acquisition of the utmost value, as it placed the garrison more on an equality with the enemy than they had been, and enabled them to check the approach of gun and mortar-boats. This event gave great dissatisfaction at Madrid. The King and the Prince of Asturias expressed suspicions of the treachery of their French allies, who, with so powerful a fleet, had not prevented the garrison from receiving supplies for a third time. They admitted, indeed, that, as the affair happened in passion-week, the English might have taken advantage of the moment when the Catholic enemies were at confession, in preparation for Easter*.

March 22nd. Partial supply.

April. De Crillon commands.

After the surrender of Minorca, the Duc De Crillon, with twenty thousand French and Spanish troops, joined the besiegers, and, suspending the Spanish General, Alvarez, assumed the command. The garrison received information of these circumstances, and of the intention of the enemy to make their principal attack by sea, with battering ships of a new construction, calculated to resist the effect of shells, and even of red-hot cannon balls. They displayed no alarm at these tidings, nor at the view of the formidable preparations in the port of Algesiras; confidence and alacrity generally prevailed, and the privates even volunteered extra services to assist the artillery corps. In the adverse camp, fear and distrust were diffused, delusive assurances, encouraging promises, threats, and punishments, were insufficient to deter large parties from desertion into the country, and individuals into the garrison. The vigilance and judg-

* State Papers, 12th April, 1782.

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ment of Elliot pervaded every part of his command, and the confidence of those under him rose in proportion; they sustained with unshaken intrepidity the tremendous and now unceasing cannonade, returning a well-directed fire, which often destroyed the artillery, and demolished some works of the besiegers.

June.

Construction of floating batteries.

The Duc De Crillon had formerly commanded in the Spanish lines before Gibraltar, and was perfectly acquainted with the state of the fortress. To conquer it had long been one of his favourite speculations. On occasion of a violent storm in 1765, accompanied with an inundation, although the nations were at peace, he declared that, if Heaven had thrown in his way a circumstance so favourable, and a considerable breach had been made in the wall, he must have represented it to the Spanish court, who would judge of the risques they chose to incur. In the following year, anticipating a breach between England and Spain, he gave orders, in Cadiz and its neighbourhood, for assembling a great military force, ready to march at an hour's notice; boats were collected and preparations made; but they were countermanded. His plan was to form a siege with twenty thousand men, and to try a coup-de-main with five hundred; if that failed, he would persevere in a regular siege, and for the result would be answerable with his head. His proposal was not adopted; and he was reprimanded by his court. At this time he advanced to the attempt, flushed with conquest, and with greater means than he had desired. His operations were assisted by M. d'Arçon, an able engineer, and Don Buenaventura Moreno conducted the fleet. The battering ships invented by M. d'Arçon were vaunted as impregnable and incombustible. They were fortified, to the thickness of six or seven feet on the larboard side, with great timbers bolted with iron, cork, junk, and raw hides; they carried guns of heavy metal, and were bomb-proof at the top, the roof being constructed with a descent for the shells to slide off, termed in military phrase *à dos d'ane*. Ten of these formidable floating towers the enemy designed to moor within half gun-shot of the walls, with iron chains,

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while large boats, with mantelets formed with hinges to fall down and facilitate landing, were to be placed at a small distance, full of troops, to take advantage of occurrences. Forty thousand men were to be placed in the camp; but the principal attack was to be made by sea, and covered by a squadron of men of war, with bomb-ketches, floating batteries, gun and mortar-boats. Such were the preparations on which the enemy relied, and which they boasted as sufficient to beat the fortifications to powder.

Preparations for defence.

For some time after the floating batteries were complete, the grand assault was deferred, the interval being employed in preparing and making additions to the approaches by land. General Elliot was with equal activity engaged in the means of defence; among the most conspicuous of which was a copious distribution of furnaces and grates, for heating cannon balls*. He had, a few days before the decisive assault, a pleasing presage of their general effect, by burning one of the most prominent and best defended works of the besiegers.

4th Sept.

9th & 10th. Attack by land.

This event precipitated the grand attack; alarmed for the fate of the remaining works, the Duc De Crillon opened his batteries in an unfinished state, and maintained an incessant cannonade from an hundred and seventy pieces of ordnance, of the largest calibre. The ships of war, gun and mortar boats, also annoyed the garrison and the town. In the space of two days, five thousand five hundred and twenty-seven shot, and two thousand three hundred and two shells, were expended from the land batteries alone, to which the garrison returned only a few rounds, against working parties employed in repairs.

11th and 12th Sept.

The next day produced a still more vigorous discharge; and, on the ensuing morning, the garrison beheld the combined fleets of France and Spain, anchored in the Bay between the Orange Grove and Algesiras.

Naval force of the enemy.

The force of the enemy was ostentatiously paraded

* In justice to Sir Robert Boyd, it should be commemorated, that the plan of destroying the battering vessels by red-hot shot originated with him.

before the eyes of the besieged, as if intended to unnerve their exertions by terror; and an armament more calculated to produce that effect was never perhaps drawn forth. Forty-seven sail of the line, ten *invincible* battering ships, carrying two hundred and twelve guns, numerous frigates, xebeques, bomb-ketches, cutters, gun and mortar boats, with smaller craft for the purpose of disembarkation, were assembled in the Bay. On the land side were stupendous batteries and works, mounting two hundred pieces of heavy ordnance, and protected by an army of forty thousand men, commanded by a victorious and active general, and animated by the presence of two princes of the blood, the Comte D'Artois and his cousin the Duc De Bourbon, a number of officers of the first distinction, an immense collection of spectators who crowded the adjacent hills, and the general expectation of the world.

Land force.

To this prodigious force was opposed a garrison of seven thousand effective men, including the marine brigade, with only eighty cannon, seven mortars, and nine howitzers. A prevalent sense of the importance of the station, and the glory which would redound from the defeat of so powerful a foe, raised enthusiastic ardour; and the encouragement the enemy might derive from acting under the eyes of the descendants of their sovereigns, was more than counter-balanced by the affection which the garrison felt towards those officers who had so long shared with them every hardship, toil and privation, and whose affability, moderation, and justice, made all consider themselves a family, a "band of brothers." They anticipated, with animated confidence, the arrival of that day which would relieve them from the tedious cruelty of a blockade.

Force of the garrison.

Having made requisite preparations for resistance, General Elliot suffered the battering ships to range in order, the nearest nine hundred, the most remote about twelve hundred yards from the walls. At a quarter before ten o'clock, the cannonade commenced; the enemy were completely moored in less than ten minutes, and the spectators on the hills witnessed a continued discharge on the garrison from four hundred pieces of

13th Sep. Grand attack.

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the heaviest artillery*. The battering ships were found to be not less formidable than they were represented. Against them, the garrison directed their whole exertion, regardless of annoyance from the land batteries; but they observed, with astonishment, that the heaviest shells rebounded from their tops, while thirty-two pound shot made no visible impression on their hulls: a momentary fire was always extinguished with water. The disappointment of their first exertions only stimulated the garrison to greater vigour; incessant showers of red-hot balls, carcases, and shells, flew from all quarters; the masts of several ships were shot away, and in the afternoon the floating batteries began to exhibit symptoms that the skill displayed in their construction could not withstand the furious cannonade to which they were exposed. The confusion on board the admiral's battering ship and her second, and the increasing smoke, demonstrated that combustion raged unsubdued; in the evening their firing was considerably diminished, and before eight o'clock it had entirely ceased, except from the two remotest floating batteries, which had sustained and could effect the least injury.

Destruction of the floating batteries.

During the night, the cannonade from the garrison was also abated, from the necessity of allowing repose to the wearied artillerymen, and the impossibility of directing the guns with certain effect. This interval was rendered awful by the signals of distress thrown up from the Spanish fleet, and the indistinct clamour, the lamentable cries, and agonizing groans which proceeded from every quarter. A little before midnight a wreck with twelve men, the survivors out of threescore, floating in, apprized the garrison that they had gained some advantage; but at one o'clock, they saw with joy the effect of their perseverance, and the termination of the hopes of the enemy, in the flames which burst at once from every part of the admiral's

* The garrison afterward learned, with satisfaction, that at this crisis the Moors at Tangier repaired to their mosques, and offered up fervent supplications for the deliverance of their old allies.

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ship, while another to the southward burnt as fatally, though with less fury.

14th Sept. Humane exertions of Captain Curtis.

The light of the conflagration enabled the garrison to direct their artillery with unerring aim, and the calmness of the sea permitted Captain Curtis*, with his gun-boats, to flank the battering ships, and intercept assistance. At four o'clock, six other floating batteries were in flames; all hope of assisting their sailors was abandoned by the enemy; but British humanity was gloriously exercised. Captain Curtis, with the marine brigade, actively seconded by Captain Sir Charles Knowles of the navy, was indefatigable in his efforts to rescue the miserable wretches, no longer considered as foes, from the dismal alternative of meeting death in flames or in the waves.

The gallant Curtis exerted his pious bravery till the explosion of a floating battery imminently endangered his own life and those of his followers, and he gained the immortal glory of rescuing from the grasp of death three hundred and forty-five of his fellow-creatures.

The destruction of eight battering ships removed every alarm from the garrison, and hopes were entertained of saving the two which remained, as trophies; but one suddenly burst into flames and blew up, and, after a survey, it was found necessary to burn the other†. The loss of the enemy, in killed and prisoners, was calculated at two thousand, while the garrison, in so furious an attack, had only one officer, two subalterns, and thirteen privates killed, and five officers and sixty-three privates wounded. The damage sustained by the fortress itself was so small, that the whole sea-line was put in serviceable order before night.

Mortification of the enemy.

Such was the end of this unparalleled attack, on the success of which the Bourbon courts had relied with a confidence which excluded all calculation of

* He received the occasional rank of brigadier.

† The destruction of these battering ships has been imputed to the thickness of the timber; the red-hot balls lodged in the sides, and it was impossible to get at, remove, or quench them. If the sides of the ships had been of the ordinary thickness, and the red-hot shot had passed through, they might not have been burnt.

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doubt; the Parisian theatre had nightly represented to admiring thousands the spectacle of the capture of Gibraltar by the Spanish gun-boats. The fruit of this presumptuous anticipation was that unmeasured ridicule which is its just and most bitter reward. The King of Spain, animated by the same spirit of confidence, had been accustomed to ask, every morning, "Is "it taken?" and, to an answer in the negative, to reply, "Well, it soon will be." On the moment of failure, this enthusiasm sunk into equal despondency. The exulting and expectant crowd dispersed in chagrin and disappointment; the French princes, who had journeyed to the pillars of Hercules to grace the capture with their presence, impatiently quitted the camp, and experienced, at the Escurial, a less cordial reception than that which had greeted their first arrival.

Public honours to the garrison. 12th and 13th Dec.

The applause of Elliot and his brave associates was universally celebrated in a tone so full and clear, as to silence even envy and detraction. The officers and privates of the garrison were gratified with the thanks of Parliament, voted with the cheerful assent and eulogies of all parties. General Elliot received, in addition, the Order of the Bath, with which he was invested by deputation on the spot which he had preserved and dignified by his conduct and prowess. He was afterwards raised to the peerage by the title of Baron Heathfield, enriched with a pension granted by Parliament, and his paternal arms were enlarged, by adding those of the fortress he had so ably defended*. One tribute which was paid to this illustrious commander deserves particular record. The King of Prussia, forgetting, in his military ardour, all feelings of spleen or prejudice, desired Mr. Elliot, the British minister at Berlin, to transmit to the general the very high enconiums he was pleased to bestow on him, adding, that he should be happy to see at Berlin an officer

* In this narrative, I have followed Colonel Drinkwater, an intelligent eye-witness of the transactions, which, in his History of the Siege, he so ably relates and describes. Many additional details will be found in Beatson's Naval and Military Memoirs, vol. v. p. 623, et seqq. and an animated and luminous narration in Archdeacon Coxe's Memoirs of the King of Spain, vol. iii. p. 458, et seqq.

of such distinguished merit, whose reputation had, in the last war, been so well established in Germany. When the siege was most critical, it is added, the King drank Elliot's health, wishing that he had such generals*. Lieutenant-General Boyd also received the honour of the Bath.

Operations of the combined fleets.

Still the discomfited besiegers permitted themselves to retain a lingering hope. Famine might accomplish that which force had failed to achieve. The destination and force of Lord Howe were not unknown; but, to prevent his efforts in supplying the garrison, the enemy had collected, in the Bay of Gibraltar, a combined fleet of fifty sail of the line, and impressed on the Commander, Don Louis De Cordova, in the strongest terms, the duty of courting, and no longer avoiding, a general encounter. Lord Howe's voyage was long delayed by unpropitious weather, and his anxiety for the garrison was proportionately increased. Arriving off Faro, he was speedily apprized of the failure of the great attack; and, although informed, at the same time, of the greatly superior force arrayed against him, he did not hesitate in pressing forward to his destination. Just at this period, a tremendous hurricane threw the combined fleet into disorder, and occasioned considerable damage. One ship of the line was forced on shore, near Algesiras, two more were driven into the Mediterranean, many sustained severe injuries; the St. Miguel, of seventy-four guns, was cast ashore near the works of the fortress; and, in spite of all efforts to rescue or destroy her, made a prize. The English fleet, which was at the mouth of the Straits, received less injury from the storm, and, after a delay, caused by negligence or mistake in some of the masters of the transports, succeeded in delivering all the stores, the ammunition, consisting of fifteen hundred barrels of gunpowder, and a reinforcement of the twenty-fifth and fifty-ninth regiments. Having thus accomplished the great end

And of Lord Howe.

9th October.

10th.

* Dispatch from Mr. Elliot to Lord Grantham, 13th October, 1782. State Papers.

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of his mission, the noble Admiral awaited with firmness the attack of the enemy, who, with sixty-five sail, forty-two of which were of the line, kept in sight for some days; but, although they always had the option, no superiority of strength, nor advantage of wind, could tempt them to hazard more than a partial action, and the grand fleet returned to England prosperous and safe.

From this time till the conclusion of the war, the semblance of a siege of Gibraltar was maintained. Numerous projectors offered plans for the conquest or destruction of the fortress; but they were considered too feeble to succeed, or too wild to be attempted*. The time at length arrived when General Elliot could invite the Duc de Crillon, no longer his enemy, to see his fortress and partake his hospitalities. He received, on this occasion, one of the highest rewards of his noble services, the grateful acknowledgment of the benevolent care and hearty liberality with which the wounded and the prisoners had been treated, not only through orders from superior officers, but from the spontaneous sympathy of all ranks, even the private men, who shared with the unfortunate their bedding, their apparel, and their food. It was found that, for some time past, all probability of reducing the fortress by famine had disappeared; for the Spaniards, allured by high prices, immediate payment, and kind treatment, had contrived, by contraband commerce, to supply the garrison with all things abundantly, or even to excess†.

Progress of negotiation.

When the failure of their three great projects shewed the allied powers the little probability of their effecting by force, at that time, the great object of all

* For example, one was to excavate a huge mine, and blow up the whole rock with gunpowder.

† The authorities previously mentioned, and Barrow's Life of Earl Howe, c. 5. Soon after the destruction of the floating batteries (September 21st), a letter was written by a French officer from Madrid to Paris, saying, "The "whole court, the whole city, the whole kingdom, is in consternation at this dis- "astrous event at Gibraltar. Of three hundred and thirty-five prisoners of war, "General Elliot has sent all the officers to camp on their parole. They all speak "in terms of unbounded commendation of the attention and affability of that "General, who invited forty of them to a dinner of the most elegant and exquisite "description." State Papers.

their combination, the destruction of England, it remained only to seek advantages in the arts of diplomatic dexterity and official chicane. Great Britain was no longer to be viewed as a prostrate power, by whom terms of peace, dictated by her enemies, were to be received with humble thankfulness; but the final arrangement was delayed by jealousies and intrigues affecting the relative position of the combined powers toward each other.

America.

Between the American negotiators there existed a material difference; Dr. Franklin was artful, insincere, grasping, and swayed by hatred of Great Britain; while Mr. Jay, who is described as a man of good sense, frank, easy, and polite manners, sought the good of America, without being rancorously hostile to England. On the unqualified concession of independence, he regretted that it had not been made at an earlier period; it would then have given stability to that bias and attachment to Great Britain which subsisted in all parts of the country, and a treaty might have been concerted, which would not only have restored peace, but formed the basis of amity and obliterated all resentments. Allowing that there were still many, who, from long habit and old recollection, would retain a partiality toward the mother-country, he described the rising and all future generations as likely to be impressed only with images of wrongs sustained and evils inflicted during the contest. Mr. Oswald accounted naturally and truly for these circumstances. Ministers, who could not be personally acquainted with the circumstances of the country, acted on the information they so constantly received of the great proportion of friends they possessed in all the colonies, who required only a temporary support from government to restore all things to their original state of peace and subordination. He mentioned also, that England had entered into the last war principally to protect the Americans from the effects of the intrigues of the French with the savages; but on that account he was told no obligation was due; America, being then as much a part of the British empire as

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Great Britain or Ireland, was equally entitled to protection; but to France, Spain, and Holland they were under great obligations, both for military aid and pecuniary supplies, and could not desert them in a negotiation.

The loyalists.

With Dr. Franklin, one principal subject of discussion was the fate of the loyalists, who were certainly intitled to all the protection that England could afford them. If, in the course of the war, we had suffered through their misrepresentations, there was no ground for accusing them of deceit or fraud. What they asserted firmly, they believed sincerely; what they promised, they exerted all the means in their power to perform; they maintained principles of duty, and sacrificed to them all their possessions, their hopes, and their lives. So firm were they in their opinions that, while the treaty was in progress, those of Pennsylvania, Maryland, Newcastle, Kent, and Sussex on Delaware, presented an address to Sir Guy Carleton, declaring that, notwithstanding the continuance of their oppressions, and the discouraging votes of the House of Commons, they still retained their loyalty and affection to their sovereign, and were determined to oppose the independence of Congress at all events, and at the hazard of their lives and fortunes. But if Great Britain should withdraw her claim and right to sovereignty, and discharge her subjects from their allegiance, then, and not till then, they would consider themselves a deserted people, left in a state of nature, and at liberty to become the subjects and sue for the protection of the French and other nations, whom they now deemed their enemies. Similar addresses, or vigorous remonstrances, were presented by the loyalists of New York and some other places; but, in fact, their situation was hopeless: no peace which did not comprize the subjection of America could have rendered their property or their lives secure: from the rancour entertained against them by their own countrymen, they were treated with more humanity and kindness even by the French. In public meetings, and addresses through the press, they were held up to

June.

detestation and vengeance, and all the blood which had been shed and the calamities incurred were ascribed to their avarice and tyranny*.

Far from exhibiting toward these unhappy people any sentiment of humanity, Dr. Franklin, while he persisted in denying that Congress could alter or repeal the confiscations enacted in particular states, maintained that, if justice required that any compensation should be made to them, it ought to proceed from England; but, as if afraid of doing them even an indirect service, he added, that England was under no great obligations to them, since, by their misrepresentations and bad counsels, she had been drawn into this miserable war†.

Compensation for those who had suffered in the progress of hostilities was still demanded, and commissioners were employed by Congress to examine and report on the extent of their losses‡; nor was the questions of boundary and fishery easy of adjustment.

France, Spain, and Holland.

France was enveloped in the mists and entangled in the mazes of her own chicanery. When the great object of severing the colonies from Great Britain was attained, the difficult question of the position to be assumed in the political world by the newly-created power caused great embarrassment. Their ministers always professed a determination to act only in conjunction with all their allies, although all their interests could not be adjusted in one treaty; but while they felt satisfied that Spain and Holland would in all things make common cause with them, and submit entirely to their management, they had many alarms respecting America. Their desire was to acquire in that country an influence which would assure an absolute control; but they were not yet sufficiently assured of the possession of such an ascendancy, nor free from apprehensions of the result of a new state of things. At an early period of the negotiation, they assumed a lofty tone, demanded in all quarters of the

* State Papers.
† Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 359, 406, 408.
‡ Same p. 408.

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globe concessions utterly inconsistent with the greatness, safety, or honour of England, not hesitating to assign as a reason, that no conditions could be too hard or degrading for us, after the iniquitous and humiliating terms we had imposed on them in the treaty of 1763. Hence they felt authorized to require the absolute sovereignty over that part of Newfoundland which they had hitherto been permitted to frequent during the fishing season; the privilege of erecting fortifications on the Gold Coast of Africa; restitution of Chandernagore and Pondicherry, with a great cession of territory in India; that we should subscribe the principles of the armed neutrality, and give up the right of preventing the fortification of Dunkirk. In return for all this, France was to restore the islands she had captured in the West Indies, except, perhaps, Dominica or Grenada; and no treaty could be made, unless we also satisfied the demands of Spain and Holland; the former power requiring possession of Minorca and Gibraltar, and the renunciation of the right of cutting logwood in the Bay of Honduras; the latter, the gratuitous restitution of all the settlements she had lost during the war.

7th August.

17th.

These haughty terms were proposed by De Vergennes to Mr. Fitzherbert, when Rodney's victory was known, and when the state of affairs in India was not yet ascertained. A plan of campaign was arranged, that, after the capture of Gibraltar, which was deemed certain, a very large detachment of the combined fleet should be sent to St. Domingo, to pursue the intended operation against Jamaica. The glorious event of the thirteenth of September having frustrated these projects, financial difficulties pressing on every side, jealousies arising among the confederated powers, and mutual suspicions of insincerity between the French and the Americans, lofty demands were no longer enforced; but, for the purpose of gaining time, propositions were introduced calculated only for delay. Beside the claim of compensation for ships taken before the last war, it was required that payment should be made for French property captured by Rodney at St.

Eustatia; and a threat was held out, that, if it were refused, the amount should be levied on the British inhabitants of Grenada. In fact, the politics of the French court exhibited a strong feeling of mortification, disappointment, and distrust of all their allies, while financial difficulties, and the altered state of the public mind, rendered the continuance of war almost impossible. M. De Vergennes was known to have had warm discussions with M. D'Aranda and Dr. Franklin. Dispatches from M. De Rochambeau increased the suspicions of France with respect to the fidelity, or rather the submissiveness, of the Americans, now their point was attained; nor were they free from fears that the subjects of their own country, tempted by new prospects and allured by expectations from a new form of government, would emigrate in great numbers, carrying away portions of their most useful artificers and their arts. Nor were they more at ease with respect to the Dutch. Those equivocal allies, De Vergennes observed in the spring, notwithstanding the resolutions they had promulgated, evinced no disposition to send their fleet to sea. "Perhaps," he said, "these mercenary spirits have been deterred by "the check which has been sustained by our Indian "convoy."

13th October.

31st May.

Mr. Fitzherbert was instructed never to lose sight of the treaty of Paris as the basis of a new treaty. That able negotiator felt, with Lord Grantham, that his country, having conceded the independence of America, and borne the expenses of the war, had made sufficient sacrifices, without encouraging any further expectations. He soon perceived, that however M. De Vergennes might affect disguise, or desire delay, he was truly desirous of peace, a measure essentially necessary to the interests of his country. The necessity resulted alike from the miserable state of the French navy, both absolutely, and comparatively with that of Great Britain, the evident relaxation of those ties which connected France with America, the utter inability of the people to pay even the present imposts, much less those which another campaign would require;

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the distress felt not more in the provinces than in the capital: there the war, which had long been unpopular, was universally reprobated, and it was generally maintained, that, during its whole progress, France had been the dupe of her allies, the Americans and the Spaniards; in the last campaign, particularly, the two conspicuously abortive attempts, on Jamaica and Gibraltar, had been undertaken solely for the sake of Spain*.

It has already been noticed, on the authority of Mr. Pickering, that the Americans were not unapprized of a secret intrigue, adverse to their interests, attempted by the French at the court of London; but it is also averred that a deeper and more dangerous design disclosed itself. The French, however exulting in the separation of the colonies from England, were apprehensive of the consequences which might ensue from the formation of an independent republic in America, and sent to M. De Marbois, their minister at Philadelphia, a long list of questions relative to the most effectual means of preventing the internal growth, and checking the external power, of the new republic. The answer formed a voluminous report, containing a regular and systematic plan for exciting such a spirit of discord, not only in the several states, but even among different classes of individuals, as would have almost reduced the country to its state of original wildness and barbarism. This dispatch, being intercepted by a British cruizer, was shewn to the American commissioners. The indignation of Adams and Jay was roused at this instance of perfidy; they thought themselves justified in acceding to separate articles with England; overruled the opposition of Franklin, and by threats deterred him from disclosing the secret to the French ministry†.

* State Papers according to dates.

† Coxe's House of Austria, vol. iii. p. 603. This account was not known to, or not believed by, the judicious author of the Life of Gouverneur Morris; for after expressing becoming indignation at the degredation of Congress in the instructions they gave to their Commissioners, he says: "They took care to quiet "the clamours of conscience, and save the wounded dignity of their country, by "breaking the instructions as soon as they came to act. They cut the Gordian "knot in the way in which all such knots are usually cut. In this they did partly "right and partly wrong. They did right to act for themselves, and on their own

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Whether this information was or was not correct in all its extent, the American commissioners, having signed preliminary articles, the fact was, after many days, disclosed to M. De Vergennes, in terms as brief, and void of all semblance of courtesy, or expression of gratitude, as could be imagined. Shortly afterward, a pass was obtained from the British government for conveying the preliminaries to America; and, on this being communicated, De Vergennes, politely, but with evident displeasure, remonstrated against the course which had been pursued. It was contrary to the instructions of Congress, and not consistent with the decorum *(bienséance)* due to the king. In his reply, the American, consulting at once the voice of prudence and of inclination, expressed a strong sense of the obligation which he and every American owed to the King, whom they all loved and honoured, and hoped that a failure, which he admitted to have been made in a point of *bienséance*, would be excused, and that the great work, hitherto so happily conducted and so nearly brought to a conclusion, would not be ruined by a single indiscretion. As the English flattered themselves that they had totally divided the two countries, he hoped this little misunderstanding would be kept a perfect secret*.

13th Nov. Separate articles agreed on with America.

29th.

15th Dec.

Whatever effect this feeble apology might have on the mind of the French ministers, the period of procrastination drew to its close. Mr. Fitzherbert had informed them that, as his Majesty could not meet Parliament without being able to announce the certainty of peace or the continuance of war, a prorogation had taken place; but it was not to be erroneously conceived that such a measure could be repeated. Such an effect would not be produced by cavils and objections, nor would the impatience which thus appeared to be expressed, influence Great Britain to make

" responsibility, and make as good a treaty as they could; they did wrong in " signing the treaty without the knowledge and concurrence of their friends " and allies, who were still their friends, and wished them all the success they " could gain, in spite of their jealousies, suspicions, and surmises." Sparks's Life of Gouverneur Morris, vol. i. 238.

* Franklin's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 413 to 419.

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any concessions which would not be accorded if there were much more time to regulate arrangements*.

1782. 22d Nov. Information communicated to the public.

Although a due portion of secrecy was still necessary, the Secretary of State, after the treaty with America had been signed, wrote to the Lord Mayor of London, and, to prevent speculations in the funds, announced, that the negotiations promised a decisive conclusion, either for peace or war, and that Parliament would on that account be prorogued to the fifth of December.

State of parties. July.

During the intire recess, the efforts of party were industriously exerted to interest the public in the cause of those who expected or possessed the direction of affairs. The curiosity to ascertain the precise causes of the late surprising change in the cabinet, was only gratified by partial statements and general rumours. Mr. Fox declared in Parliament that he had, some time before the death of the Marquis of Rockingham, resolved to resign, from an impossibility of concurring in the opinions and systems of Lord Shelburne; many complaints were made, though not supported by specific allegations, of the predominating influence of that minister's counsels, which drove his late colleagues from office; but neither the crimination nor the defence of the new cabinet afforded a clear insight into the motives of disunion. The kingdom was divided into three parties, who defended and attacked with equal zeal and acrimony. The acts of the Rockingham administration were reviewed with asperity, not more by those who considered their reforms too violent, than by those who had formed exaggerated hopes from their promises, and thought they had not fulfilled the expectations to which they had given birth†. The sincerity of the ministry in the negotiations for peace was questioned by both parties in opposition, and the adherents of Lord North seemed assured that the collision of opinions, and exposition of the views of those who had excluded him from power, would effect a change in

* State Paper, 23rd of November.

† See particulars of a conversation at the anniversary of Mr. Fox's election. Remembrancer, vol. xiv. p. 290.

the public opinion beneficial to his fame and gratifying to their hopes*.

5th Dec. Meeting of Parliament. King's speech.

Such was the state of the public mind, when, the period of prorogation having expired, the King addressed to Parliament a speech of unusual length. He stated his exertions for a general pacification, in pursuit of which he had exercised the powers vested in him by the legislature, and offered to declare the American colonies free and independent states, *by an article to be inserted in the treaty of peace.* "In thus admitting their separation from the crown of Britain," he said, I have sacrificed every consideration of my own to the wishes and opinion of the people. I make it my humble and earnest prayer to Almighty God, that Great Britain may not feel the evils which might result from so great a dismemberment of the empire; and that America may be free from those calamities which have formerly proved in the mother-country how essential monarchy is to the enjoyment of constitutional liberty. Religion—language—interest—affections, may, and I hope will, yet prove a bond of permanent union between the two countries: to this end, neither attention nor disposition shall be wanting on my part.

Among many other topics, the speech mentioned the valiant exertions of the army and navy, the favourable state of the negotiations, the economical reforms which would be necessary at home, and the attention which must be employed in the government of Ireland and of India.

Debate on the address.

The address in the House of Commons was moved by Mr. Philip Yorke, and seconded by Mr. Bankes. No direct opposition was made; but Mr. Fox objected to the mode of granting American independence, and stated that a difference in opinion with the present ministers on that subject had induced him to quit the cabinet. He was inclined "to recognize the inde-

* Gibbon says: a certain late secretary of Ireland reckons the House of Commons thus: Minister one hundred and forty, Reynard ninety, Boreas one hundred and twenty, the rest unknown or uncertain. The last of the three, by self or agents, talks too much of absence, neutrality, moderation. I still think he will discard the game. Gibbon's Miscellaneous Works, vol. i. p. 561

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"pendence of America in the first instance, and not "reserve it as the condition of peace." Lord Shelburne, he said, had fully, though reluctantly, agreed in this principle; but, afterward swerving from it, occasioned the division of the cabinet.

Lord North did not agree with Mr. Fox, that the independency of America ought to be surrendered without an equivalent. The country, he said, was not reduced to the abject situation of accepting such terms of peace as the enemy might think fit to offer: the House would be unanimous in demanding an honourable peace, or a vigorous war. He would not oppose the address, but reserved the right of objecting to the provisional treaty.

Mr. Burke decried the speech from the throne as a dangerous species of delusion and insinuation, a collection of unmeaning professions, and of undeserved self-praises; yet he expressed his readiness to thank his Majesty for concluding a provisional agreement which ended the American war.

In the House of Lords.

In the Upper House, the address also passed without a division; a slight amendment, proposed by Lord Radnor, acknowledging with gratitude the sacrifice made by his Majesty to the wishes of his people, being unanimously adopted. In the conversation which took place, Lord Stormont vehemently arrainged the irrevocable concession of independence to American commissioners acting under the inspection and control of France. Lord Shelburne denied that the proceedings of the American commissioners were so influenced, and affirmed that the offer of independence was not unqualified, unconditional, and irrevocable. If France did not agree to peace, independence would not be granted.

6th Dec. On the report.

This explanation occasioned severe animadversions, on reporting the address to the Lower House. Several members seemed to repent their vote of the preceding day, and confined their approbation to the grant of American independence. Mr. Burke described the King's speech as a farrago of hypocrisy and absurdity, and analyzed every part of it with severe animadver-

sions. Mr. Pitt, while he censured the tone of burlesque and levity used by Mr. Burke as entirely unbefitting the nature of the debate and the situation of the country, answered his arguments in a clear and masterly manner*. No motion was made.

Other questions and reflections on American independence occasioned debates in both Houses, in which duplicity and discordancy of opinion were imputed to ministers; but no division took place, till Mr. Fox moved for copies of such parts of the provisional treaty as related to the recognition of American independence, founding his argument on the diversity of language used by ministers in the various forms of communicating instructions and intelligence.

11th and 13th Dec.

Mr. Thomas Pitt moved for the order of the day: he was supported by Lord North, and the division by which it was carried demonstrated the weakness of the other body of opposition, who could only produce forty-six votes, against two hundred and nineteen. In a few days the House adjourned for the Christmas recess.

18th Dec.

23rd Dec. Recess.

* Mr. Pitt observed, in the course of his speech, that if Mr Burke meant to charge him with any equivocation or duplicity, he should only say (if it might be permitted to him to use such an expression to one so much his senior) that the imputation had his scorn and contempt. Mr. Burke answered, that by the use of such words he was attacked with unfair weapons, for, however they might differ in their opinions, no circumstance under heaven could make him treat the right honourable gentleman with scorn and contempt.

CHAPTER THE FORTY-NINTH.

1782—1783.

Preliminaries signed.—Substance of the treaty with America—France—Spain.—Truce with Holland.—Preliminaries laid before Parliament.—Coalition between Lord North and Mr. Fox.—Debates on the Peace.—Arguments in support—Objections—Answered.—Debates in the House of Lords.—Resolutions condemning the Peace.—Resignation of Lord Shelburne.—Parliamentary reflections on the coalition.—Sensation of the public.—Ministerial interregnum.—Offers to Mr. Pitt.—Motions on the subject.—New ministry.—Commercial intercourse with America regulated.—Debates on the loan.—Economical reforms.—Mr. Pitt's motions for a reform of Parliament.—Affairs of Ireland.—First petition for abolishing the Slave Trade.—Separate establishment of the Prince of Wales.—Close of the Session.—Definitive treaties of peace executed.

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1783. 20th January. Preliminaries signed. Substance of the treaty with America.

Before Parliament resumed its sitting, preliminaries of peace were concluded with France and Spain, and the relative state of the contending powers was regulated, and America gained a full recognition of the thirteen provinces, as free, sovereign, and independent states. The boundaries of territory were accurately and, for America, advantageously settled. The people had liberty to take fish on all the banks of Newfoundland, but not to dry or cure them in any of His Majesty's settled dominions; and the navigation of the Mississippi, from its source to the ocean, was free to both parties.

It was also agreed that Congress should *recommend* to the legislatures of the respective states to provide for the restitution of all estates, rights, and properties belonging to real British subjects, and to persons resident in districts in the King's possession, who had

not borne arms against them. All other persons were at liberty to remain a year in any of the provinces, for the purpose of obtaining their confiscated estates. Congress *recommending* to the several legislatures a consideration or revision of the laws of forfeiture, and a restitution of property, on payment, by the dispossessed proprietors, of the sums for which it had been sold to others. No future confiscations were to be made, or prosecutions commenced; but all prisoners, military and political, to be liberated. The claim to indemnity for towns desolated and property destroyed was given up.

France.

By the treaty with France, the right of that nation to fish at Newfoundland, and in the gulph of St. Lawrence, was re-established on the same footing as in the treaties of Utrecht and Paris, except that, for the prevention of disputes, the limits were more accurately defined and restrained. St. Pierre and Miquelon were surrendered to France.

In the West Indies, Great Britain restored St. Lucie, and ceded Tobago; and France gave up Grenada, with its dependencies, St. Vincent's, Dominica, St. Christopher's, Nevis, and Montserrat.

Great Britain ceded to France the river of Senegal in Africa, with its dependencies and forts, and the Island of Goree; retaining the possession of Fort James, and the River Gambia.

The French regained all their establishments in Orissa and Bengal, with liberty to make a ditch round Chandernagore, and security for prosecuting their accustomed commerce either by a company or individuals. Pondicherry and Carical were restored, with the reservation of a right to certain circumjacent dependencies. The French also regained Mahé and the Comptoir of Surat, with liberty of commerce in that part of India.

8th Nov.

Great Britain abrogated and suppressed all articles in the treaty of Utrecht relative to the demolition of Dunkirk, and this point was conceded at an early period of the negotiation, in a manner so generous and handsome as to obtain the warmest thanks of the

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French ministry. Not in this particular alone, but throughout the negotiation, the candour and good faith of the British court were conspicuous, and they were afterwards most fully and explicitly acknowledged by the French King*.

Spain.

The treaty with Spain comprised but few objects; all solicitations and offers respecting Gibraltar were rejected: Minorca and East Florida were ceded by Great Britain; and the Catholic King retained West Florida, but guaranteed the unmolested right of cutting logwood in the Bay of Honduras, and restored Providence and the Bahama islands†.

Truce with Holland.

Holland also agreed to a cessation of hostilities; but the preliminaries of peace were not yet arranged. The conduct of this country in negotiating was not more wise, nor less extraordinary, than it had been in making war. At an early period, their plenipotentiary, M. De. Brantzen, required a recognition of the right of the republic to a perfect freedom of navigation in time of war, alleging that it had already been promised by Mr. Fox in his letter to M. Simolin. To this intimation the obvious answer was given, that Mr. Fox's proposal was made only with reference to a separate treaty, which, having been rejected by the Dutch, the offer must be considered as not made; to view it otherwise, would be contrary to all diplomatic usage, and to every rule of justice. Throughout the residue of the transaction, they shewed a mixture of subserviency to France, discontent, sullenness, and obstinacy.

19th Sept.

22nd Jan. to 17th February. Preliminaries laid before Parliament. Coalition between Lord North and Mr. Fox.

When the preliminary and provisional articles of peace were submitted to both Houses, and while every day produced queries or observations which shewed the utmost anxiety for discussion, a new political arrangement materially affected the state of parties. While those who were attached to the opinions and principles of the ministry, of Lord North, and of Mr. Fox, were separate, the affairs of government could not be

* Letter from Mr. Fitzherbert to Lord Grantham, 25th January, 1783. State Papers.

† See the preliminary treaties and provisional articles in the Debates, and the Annual Register for 1782. The Bahamas were recaptured before the execution of the treaty.

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efficiently conducted. The terms of peace were likely to produce great diversities of opinion; and, unless the cabinet was strengthened by an alliance with one of the opposition parties, ministers could not hope to maintain their situations, nor could either of those parties, unsupported by the other, hope to form a permanent administration. Lord Keppel had retired with disgust in the course of the negotiation, and was succeeded by Lord Hawke; but it was apparent that, among the remaining members of government, some entertained political opinions adverse to their colleagues. The most natural association was a reunion of the ministry with those who had lately seceded; but against this, as against every other arrangement, formidable difficulties presented themselves. Mr. Pitt was regarded by all parties as a person whose aid and countenance would be useful and honourable. He had shewn, during the short period of his parliamentary life, that he had powers of the highest order: he could fix the attention and animate the feelings of the House on great objects and general principles; he could, even when suddenly called on, resist the tried eloquence and persuasive reasoning of Mr. Fox; and, with equal promptitude and force, repel and frustrate the vehement rhetoric and unmeasured vituperation of Mr. Burke; it was obvious that, from other adherents of either party he had nothing to apprehend; and it was equally clear that no party to which he might attach himself would ever be weakened by his indiscretion, or betrayed by his inconstancy. He was above the reach of common allurements: no appointment presenting the temptation of wealth alone could influence him, for he had declared that he would not accept one of inferior description, meaning one which should not give him a place in the cabinet. Although not endowed with the gifts of fortune, he was prepared to surrender all that political ambition could offer, and apply exclusively to that profession in which it was allowed by all competent judges that he could not fail of attaining wealth, fame, and dignities. His connexion with Lord Shelburne had arisen from one which had sub-

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sisted between that nobleman and Lord Chatham in the latter years of his life; and he was the fit person to attempt the reunion of Mr. Fox with the present cabinet. By appointment, he waited on him to make the proposal. When he answered the first question proposed, whether it was intended that Lord Shelburne should remain first Lord of the Treasury, in the affirmative, Mr. Fox replied that it was impossible for him to be a member of any administration of which that noble Lord should be the head; and the conference, the last which ever occurred between these two eminent persons in private, terminated ineffectually. In the bosom of Mr. Fox, indignation against Lord Shelburne was more lively than against Lord North; to him he had made advances for reconciliation, and, as neither Lord Shelburne nor Lord North would accept a seat in the cabinet with the other, the union of these ancient and, as it was thought, irreconcileable opponents was effected*.

Debates on the peace. 17th Jan.

It was known that the strength of parties would be tried and the fate of administration decided by the votes of Parliament on the preliminary articles of peace; and, on the day when, by his Majesty's command, they were presented, ministers experienced in the House of Commons a little contradiction, similar to one which, on a former occasion, had exposed Lord North to ridicule, and might, on the present, have been deemed a bad omen. Lord Newhaven, alleging the deep interest which the public felt on the subject, required that the treaties should be printed. The motion was resisted on the grounds that it was without precedent, and that foreign courts felt great delicacy on such subjects. A debate, in which considerable warmth was displayed, was terminated by information from Mr. Wilkes, that the House of Lords had already ordered the articles to be printed.

17th Feb.

Although there was no call of the House, two hundred and fifty members attended on the day ap-

* Chiefly from Tomline's Life of William Pitt, vol. i. c. 2, and generally from all the histories of the period.

pointed for discussing the preliminaries. The address was moved by Mr. Thomas Pitt, and seconded by Mr. Wilberforce. Two amendments were proposed: one by Lord John Cavendish, reserving to the House a power of disapproving the terms; the other by Lord North, expressing the regard of Parliament for the loyalists; but all parties concurred in maintaining inviolate the articles for which the public faith was pledged.

Arguments in support of it.

In support of the original address, it was urged that the question should be reduced to this point; whether such a peace as the ministry had made was preferable to the war in which they found the country involved? The interest of the public debt was increased from four millions and a half to nine millions and a half, and a permanent burden was entailed on the land equal to ten shillings in the pound. At the close of the last war, the necessity of peace was supported by the wisest authorities, and their arguments would be much more applicable to the present period. For a peace so necessary we paid to France and Spain, one small island in the West Indies, the two Floridas, Minorca dismantled, and therefore useless, and some immaterial advantages in fishery and East India settlements. Less it could not be supposed they would exact, considering the humiliating terms imposed on them in 1762. Independence to America was no concession, since Great Britain could not deprive her of it, and the House had in the last session precluded every such attempt; the extension of their boundary was to us no disadvantage; but the limits in lakes and rivers were well chosen for the prevention of future contests. We were without an ally, and had knocked for peace at every door; the present terms could not be censured, unless it were proved that the difference between them, and those which we had a right to expect, was equivalent to the expense of sixteen or twenty millions, the charge of another year's contest. Sufficient was still left to render the country great and flourishing; but, if the treaties did not receive the sanction of Parliament, no future administration could

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make such a peace as the necessities of the country might require.

1783. Objections.

The advocates of the amendments argued, that the true question to be discussed, was not whether the peace was preferable to the war, but whether, under present circumstances, a better peace could have been obtained? And to this they would answer, a worse could not have been concluded. It beggared all the treaties that ever had existed in infamy and disgrace, and rendered all quarters of the globe witnesses of the dismemberment and disunion of the British empire. From a perusal of the various articles, it would appear to be a peace patched up for the present, rather than one which promised permanence; for the preamble of each treaty, compared with the articles, seemed not to have been penned at the same time, or dictated by any concurrence or congeniality of sentiment. Mr. Fox, in particular, challenged the cabinet ministers to produce, or authorize him to produce, the peace he had projected; it was in the office, and if it could be exhibited to his disadvantage, he was content to be considered as a man capable of advising a worse peace than the present.

Lord North prefaced an able analysis of the treaties, by observing, that although he was neither a minister nor a candidate to become a minister, he could not but sympathize with ministers from his experience of their situation. He had been asked, whether, if he disapproved this peace, he would have made a better? the proper question was, whether this was such a peace as ought to have been made. In displaying its imperfections, he stated that the permission to fortify St. Pierre and Miquelon had been carefully avoided on all former occasions; it would materially affect the Newfoundland fishery, and enable France to carry it on even in time of war. The importance of St. Lucie was proved by the cession of five conquered islands as an equivalent. In Africa, Great Britain had restored all; and in India, the French were reinstated in their former establishments, with many unusual advantages. And although Dunkirk was no longer to be held in the

same estimation as it was considered by the framers of the peace of Utrecht, still the restraint on France was honourable to Great Britain, and the abrogation of former treaties impolitic, if not unnecessary. To keep an English commissary on the territories of an enemy, for the purpose of reporting and preventing the erection of walls or fortifications, or even the cleaning of a harbour for the admission of ships exceeding a certain burden, perpetuated the former victories, and exalted the present power of Great Britain, while it debased the dignity of the French. They had not, it was true, fortified Dunkirk during the war, because they had been obliged, at the conclusion of every former peace, to destroy fortifications, and had learnt by experience to avoid unavailing expense; but, in a future contest, Great Britain would experience all the evils which rendered the demolition of Dunkirk necessary. He considered the cession of Minorca to Spain unfortunate, that of East Florida improvident: as it was rendered of additional value since the loss of West Florida. The permission to cut logwood, was a nugatory stipulation, as no district was assigned. The Bahama islands were not comparable in value to the Florida lost and the Florida ceded, which afforded such abundant means of annoying the Jamaica trade. Minorca was of more value than even the impregnable Gibraltar, on account of its harbours, climate, and excellent water for shipping. By the cession of the Floridas and Minorca, we had given to Spain security for her commerce, particularly the gold trade, and the means of enfeebling our own.

In his objections to the provisional articles with America, Lord North was joined by many other members. The preamble declared reciprocal advantage and mutual cenvenience to be its basis; but important concessions were made without the smallest balance or equipoise. If necessity compelled us to accept terms so disgraceful, the mention of reciprocity was a wanton addition of insult to injury.

The boundaries were not only new in their nature, but so generous in their principle, that the Americans

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acquired a tract including twenty-four Indian nations in Nova Scotia and Canada, a tract where many forts had been erected and retained at a vast expense. The boundary designated in the statute book by the Quebec act, would, by keeping the Americans at a distance, have preserved the permanence of friendship; but by the present boundary they could approach within twenty-four miles of Montreal. As if naked independence was not a sufficient proof of liberality, ministers had, clothed it with the warm covering of the fur trade, and besides Charlestown, New York, Long Island, and Penobscot, had surrendered all the valuable forts in the back settlements.

In the spirit of pretended reciprocity, we had given the Americans an unlimited right to fish in Newfoundland and the gulph of St. Lawrence, even in the parts resorted to by British fishermen: but, as if every stipulation of apparent advantage to Great Britain had been studiously avoided, we had not contracted for the right of fishing on any of their coasts, or in any of their bays or creeks. How could they claim, or we grant, such a right after the establishment of independency had separated them from the sovereingty of Great Britain?

Even in smaller objects, recriprocity seemed a mere mockery: we were to withdraw our fleets and armies, and evacuate the American states; prisoners on both sides were to be liberated, and we to yield up the American fortifications with the American artillery; but no covenant was reserved for restoring to Great Britain British artillery. The pretended right of navigating the Mississippi was entirely delusive. We were excluded by the Northern boundary; the Americans possessed the East; the West had been ceded by the peace of Paris to the French, who had since granted it to Spain; and by the present treaty that power obtained each shore at its mouth. Where then was this navigation so free and open to commence? Or what possession of it could Great Britain ever acquire, except the nomination in the treaty?

The abandonment of the loyalists and inhabitants of East Florida, without reservation of their civil and

religious rights, to an incensed and vengeful power, was horrible and disgraceful; never were the honour, humanity, principles, and policy of a nation so grossly abused. The degradation of sending unmanly petitions from government to Congress, on behalf of the loyalists, was equalled only by the infamy of unconditionally assigning over the loyal inhabitants of Florida.

It might be urged that Parliament, in declaring the Americans independent, had made the peace, and and were therefore responsible for any improper concessions or restorations; but Parliament did not give instructions for the cession of Charlestown, New York, Penobscot, Rhode Island, Detroit, and the fisheries. Parliament did not order the desertion of the loyalists; Parliament had not given countenance to those acts; and therefore not they, but the ministers, were accountable to the people.

Answered.

In reply, it was observed, that the clamours against the treaties were loud in proportion to their injustice; as men in general, when they complain without cause, complain without temper. On a candid consideration of the circumstance of the country, the peace would be found as good as we had a right to expect, and one that promised permanence. The fortification of St. Pierre and Miquelon had been declared, by the most judicious officers, a measure which could give no just cause of apprehension. The position assigned for the French fishery at Newfoundland was less advantageous than they held before; and their greater distance from the British fisheries rendered disputes less probable. The restoration of St. Lucie, and other cessions in the West Indies and Africa, were justified on pleas of propriety or necessity; and those in India were made under the cognizance and with the consent of the East India Company. This fact was incontestably proved by Sir Henry Fletcher, one of the secret committee of directors, who declared that the terms were unanimously approved by that committee, and, in an able speech, specifically defended them.

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With respect to America, the House was reminded that the resolution of last year had put a padlock on the British sword. The bill enabling his Majesty to grant independence had pointed out the path to peace; and as it was obviously the interest of Great Britain to establish as close a commercial union as possible with the United States, it would have been illiberal and impolitic to withhold any thing which they might reasonably expect. Far from agreeing that the Americans, by ceasing to be British subjects, had lost all right to the fisheries, it was the wish of ministers to make no such distinctions, but consider the Americans as brethren, and leave them no cause to regret that they were not British subjects. Their fishing terminated before ours began, and it would not be possible to prevent their full use of the right, without maintaining a squadron continually on that station.

The assignment of boundaries was defended on principles of nature and policy: by their charters, several provinces had various degrees of extent northward, particularly Virginia; and the line drawn in the statute book for Canada had been one cause of the American discontents, which it was surely not our interest to revive. The fur trade was at best a matter relating to individuals only, and private considerations must give place to public good; but, in fact, enough of Canada was retained to afford ample scope for that commerce. The forts, about the surrender of which so much had been advanced, were improvidently built in situations where blockhouses or abbatis would have answered every purpose; and for Detroit, another chief fort might, at a small expense, be erected on the other side of the river.

Ministers were not less affected than other individuals at the condition of the loyalists; but the utmost concession had been obtained for them which could be insisted on, without foregoing all hopes of peace. If the recommendation of Congress to the American states should be unsuccessful, government would be in honour bound to afford a compensation. But, on the

other hand, the article which permitted the uninterrupted recovery of debts was highly beneficial to Great Britain*; and Mr. Dundas declared that the merchants of Glasgow, to whom a full third, if not two-thirds of the American debts were due, had transmitted their thanks to ministers for the stipulation.

At half-past seven o'clock in the morning, the amendments were carried by a majority of sixteen†.

Debates in the House of Lords.

In the House of Lords the Earl of Carlisle moved an amendment similar to that of Lord North. The debate was long, and replete with personality; but the attack and defence of the treaties was not distinguished by any particular variation from those in the lower House. In answer to an assertion, that the recommendation of Congress in behalf of the loyalists might be crowned with success, Lord Sackville read a resolution of the legislature of Virginia, made in consequence of the provisional treaty, declaring all demands or requests of the British court for the restitution of confiscated property, unsupported by law, equity, or policy, and

* The fallacy of this argument has been completely proved.

† 224 to 208. In the course of this debate two incidents occurred, which it may be proper to preserve, although the first is below the dignity of history, and the other may be deemed more appropriate to biography. While Lord North was speaking, a dog, who had got into the House, began to bark, and set all the members in a roar. Lord North laughed heartily; and, when the House was restored to order, he threw it again into a louder fit of laughter, by jocosely addressing the chair—"Sir, I was interrupted by a new speaker; but, as his argument is concluded, I will resume mine."

Mr. Sheridan, having in the course of a brilliant speech made many sarcastic and humorous allusions to the youth of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the inconsistency of Mr. Dundas, Mr. Pitt said that no man admired more than he did the abilities of that honourable gentleman, the elegant sallies of his thought, the gay effusions of his fancy, his dramatic turns, and his epigrammatic points; and, if they were reserved for the proper stage, they would no doubt receive what the honourable gentleman's abilities always did receive, the plaudits of the audience; and it would be his fortune "sui plausu gaudere theatri." But this was not the proper scene for the exhibition of these elegancies. Mr Sheridan, in reply, noticed that particular sort of personality which the right honourable gentleman had thought proper to introduce. He need not comment on it; the propriety, the taste, the gentlemanly point of it, must have been obvious to the House. But, said Mr. Sheridan, let me assure the right honourable gentleman, that I do now, and will at any time when he chooses to repeat this sort of allusion, meet it with the most sincere good humour. Nay, I will say more, flattered and encouraged by the right honourable gentleman's panegyric on my talents, if ever again I engage in the compositions he alludes to, I may be tempted to an act of presumption; I may attempt an improvement on one of Ben Jonson's best characters, the angry boy, in the Alchymist. Debates. Moore's Life of Sheridan, vol. i. p. 388.

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inadmissible. The amendment was, however, rejected*.

1783. 21st Feb. Resolutions condemning the peace.

The united parties, now currently known by the title of the *coalition*, followed their victory by producing, through Lord John Cavendish, a series of resolutions avowing the determination of the House to preserve the peace inviolate, but declaring the concessions to the adversaries of Great Britain more than they were entitled to claim from their individual or relative strength.

A long and animated discussion ensued, in which the public heard, with surprise, not unmixed with indignation, those who, during the war, had been most eloquent in describing the reduced condition of Great Britain, and the inexhaustible strength and resources of the enemy, adopt a language diametrically opposite. Lord John Cavendish decried the gloomy imaginations of those who could continually brood over our own losses, misfortunes, debts, and disgraces, without taking in a comparative view those of the enemy. They were not less defective in finance than we; nay, it was a question if they could find resources for another campaign; Spain had exhausted her treasury in the unsuccessful attack on Gibraltar; America could only be formidable while Great Britain employed armies on her continent; Holland was not in circumstances to claim sacrifices; and France was equally, if not more distressed than ourselves. Mr. Fox adopted the same line of reasoning, and contended that France never supported a war with more difficulty; Spain was nearly bankrupt, and America in a state of national poverty. Lord North, with more consistency, urged similar topics, particularly with respect to America; contending that, if Congress could not raise money for the maintenance of war in their own country, Great Britain had nothing to fear from their external efforts; and ministers might, without danger of prolonging hostilities, have urged with more firmness the cause of the unfortunate loyalists. In most of the states, he said, the

* 72 to 59.

people had refused to pay the impost levied by Congress for support of the war. In Rhode Island, the collectors were driven away by popular insurrection; and, in Massachuset's, the tax was discounted within the province, and never carried to the public account. The resolution of censure was carried by a majority of seventeen*.

Resignation of Lord Shelburne.

This contest decided the fate of administration. Lord Shelburne resigned his office, though a successor was not immediately appointed: nor did other members of the cabinet immediately follow his example. The character and conduct of Lord Shelburne were vehemently attacked during the late debates, and he seemed abandoned to these assaults without a defender in the lower House, except Mr. Pitt, who, in the course of an eloquent speech, pronounced on him a warm and pathetic eulogy. That noble earl, like every other man of eminent ability, acting in the first department of a great state, was liable, he said, to the envy of some, as well as the admiration of others. The obloquy to which his capacity and situation had raised him was created and circulated with equal meanness and address; but his merits were as much above panegyric, as the arts to which he owed his defamation were beneath attention. When, stript of power and emolument, he should once more descend into private life, the official superiority which irritated the feelings of his opponents, and that capacity of conferring favours which all men were fond of possessing, would not be obstacles to a just estimate of his character. He would retire firm in the dignity of his own mind, conscious of having contributed to the public advantage; and, if not attended with the fulsome plaudits of a mob, possessed of that substantial and permanent satisfaction which arises from the habitual approbation of an upright mind. To this transcendent consolation he had a title, which no accident could invalidate or affect; he had earned it dearly; and with such a solid understanding, and so much goodness of heart as stamped his character, he was in no danger of losing it.

* 207 to 190.

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Of his own approaching retirement, Mr. Pitt spoke with equal dignity; he had never, he said, been eager to gain, nor should he feel great reluctance at foregoing, official advancement. He never had a wish that did not terminate in the dearest interest of the public; but he would confess he had also his portion of ambition. High situation and great influence were desirable to most men; and, far from being ashamed to pursue, he was solicitous to possess them when they could be acquired with honour, and retained with dignity. On these respectable conditions, he was not less ambitious to be great and powerful than it was natural for men to be who had such brilliant examples. But even these objects he could relinquish, when his duty, his country, his character, or his friends, rendered the sacrifice indispensable; he then should retire, not disappointed, but triumphant. He might be divested of the privileges and emoluments of place, but could not be deprived of those habitual and warm regards for the prosperity of Great Britain, which constituted the happiness and pride of his life, and which death only could extinguish. "With this consolation," he added, though I affect not to despise, I hope soon to forget the loss of power, and the want of fortune."

> Laudo manentem; si celeres quatit
> Pennas, resigno quæ dedit——
> —————————— probamque
> Pauperiem sine dote quæro*.

Parliamentary reflections on the coalition. 17th Feb.

The coalition, though triumphant in a confirmed majority, did not obtain their conquest without many severe animadversions, which called forth all their abilities in vindication of their conduct. Mr. Powys said the present era was remarkable for strange confederacies; great and arbitrary despots stood forth the protectors of an infant republic; and, in that House, the lofty and strenuous assertors of regal prerogative united in alliance with the humble worshippers of the majesty

* In relating this passage of Mr. Pitt's life, his biographer, Dr. Tomline, Bishop of Winchester, justly notices the omission of the words, "et mea virtute me involvo," as marking equally the modesty and good taste of the young statesman. Vol. i. p. 97, 4to.

of the people; the most determined advocate of the influence of the crown might be seen hand in hand with the great purifier of the constitution. Mr. Dundas also spoke in ludicrous ridicule, as well as pointed reprobation, of the coalition, which was defended with great humour by Mr. Burke, Mr. Sheridan, and Mr. Lee; they displayed the heterogeneous composition of the ministry, derided the lord advocate for seating himself between Mr. Pitt and Mr. Thomas Townshend, his constant opponents, and reproached him for his early desertion of his old colleague, Lord North.

Mr. Fox defended the coalition on broader grounds. If men of honour, he said, could concur in points of great national concern, he saw no reason for calling such an event an unnatural junction. It was neither wise nor noble to maintain eternal animosities; nor was it just or candid to retain enmity when the cause had ceased. The American war caused the hostility between him and Lord North; that being terminated, it became wise and candid to terminate also the ill-will, the animosity, the feuds, and the rancour it had occasioned. "When I was the friend of Lord North," he continued, "I found him open and sincere; when the enemy, honourable and manly; he never practised those subterfuges, tricks, and stratagems, those behind-hand, paltry manœuvres, which destroy confidence between human beings, and degrade the character of the statesman and the man. It is not in my nature to bear malice, or live in ill-will; my friendships are perpetual, my enmities not so: *amicitiæ sempiternæ*, *inimicitiæ placabiles*."

Renewed attacks from Mr. Powys, Mr. Pitt, and Sir Cecil Wray, drew forth, in an ensuing debate, more explicit and detailed vindications. Lord John Cavendish cited, as a precedent, the famous coalition of parties in 1757, which rescued the country from the calamities of fluctuating counsels, and carried it to an unexampled pitch of glory. He avowed, with pride, that he was one of the authors of the present union, which he considered essential to the salvation of the country*. 21st Feb.

* Mr. Eden, afterward Lord Auckland, was styled, and did not reject the title, the Father of the Coalition. Tomline, vol. i. p. 99.

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Mr. Fox repeated his former arguments, adding, that the coalition had arisen only from the necessity of uniting to preserve the constitutional vigour of the state from debility.

Lord North, before he entered into a defence of the measure, vindicated his own fame against some members who asserted that he was indebted only to an excess of lenity in his late opponents for his personal safety. He reminded them that he had never abandoned his character, connexions, or political principles; he had ever been willing fairly and honourably to meet the most scrupulous inquiry into the minutest actions of his life, and was now ready to bid defiance to every species of investigation. Conscious of innocence, he was under no apprehension of incurring censure, or deserving punishment. In the coalition he saw nothing surprising. Lord John Cavendish had uniformly displayed an amiable and upright character, patriotic and disinterested principles, and a manly and engaging disposition. Differences of opinion had arisen respecting measures, which, though well intended, had unquestionably proved calamitous; but there were times and circumstances, and emergencies, when all honourable men should relinquish personal feuds and party animosities, to unite in generous exertions for the common interest. "It is also true," he said, "that Mr. Fox, when warm in the cause he espoused, has not unfrequently made me the butt of those inexhaustible powers of asperity which so eminently distinguish his eloquence; but he never charged me with want of integrity. In the early part of his career I knew him open, manly, and sincere; his temper was warm, but his nature generous; and, while I admire the vast extent of his understanding, I can rely on the goodness of his heart. As an enemy, I have always found him formidable; but, in proportion as I had reason to dread him, while our principles were adverse, I anticipate greater prospect of success now that we unite with one mind and one heart in the cause of our country. And let me hail it as an auspicious circumstance, that those who were divided by her hostilities are cemented by her peace."

In Parliament, such arguments as these might have produced their desired effect: coalitions of political leaders, who had not been less violent in mutual opposition than Lord North and Mr. Fox, were not unprecedented, nor even uncommon; and the judgment on the coalition would have been referred, as all such transactions should be, not to causes but effects; but the parties in opposition to Lord North had totally altered the frame of the public mind on such topics. Formed themselves of heterogeneous and contending bodies, the residue of all parties and connexions, their alarms were always excited by mutual jealousy and want of confidence. None trusted in the firmness of his associates; but all were apprehensive that, on a proper invitation, those with whom they were rather combined than connected would desert their cause and unite with the ministry. Hence every intimation of the necessity of union among public men was received with violent resentment by the opposition; and those who acquired, or were suspected of an intention to obtain, situations under government, were assailed with clamorous invectives, as betrayers of public principle, and deserters from the cause of the country.

Sensation of the public.

It was not, therefore, a difficult task to excite a loud and incessant clamour against the late monstrous (as it was called) coalition. All the vehicles of censure were employed to diffuse a hatred, horror, and contempt of the two parties; every unfavourable impression which had been made current against Lord North was revived, and every adverse declaration of Mr. Fox ostentatiously displayed. In no action of his life had Mr. Fox displayed less discernment. The small number of his adherents, it is true, afforded him little hope of a speedy return to power; but his popularity, the lustre reflected on his character by his late resignation, and the unpopularity of Lord Shelburne, rendered him formidable as an opponent. It could hardly escape his penetration, that advantage would be taken of his intemperate declarations in Parliament, while Lord North was minister, to sully the coalition; but he relied, perhaps with too much confidence, on his own powers, or

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on the predilection of the people, to think that such efforts would be attended with permanent success. Of the momentary disposition of the public, he had a mortifying sample at a public meeting of the electors of Westminster, where his conduct was investigated with uncommon severity; and, notwithstanding an eloquent defence by himself, and the labours of many of his friends, a vote, approving his general public conduct, was obtained with difficulty, and another in the same words was passed in favour of Sir Cecil Wray, a distinguished opponent of the coalition*.

Lord North made greater sacrifices than Mr. Fox. His personal character was triumphing over the calumnies advanced against him while in office, and the number of his adherents was daily augmenting. He was sensible that he would maintain a more exalted political situation by remaining unconnected with either of the other parties; but perceiving that a government, exposed to the mischiefs of a double opposition, distracted in its operations at so critical a period, and impeded in its progress toward the restoration of calm and regularity, must cease to be efficient or respectable, he acceded to proposals which exposed him to so large a portion of inevitable obloquy.

Ministerial interregnum.

The violence which prevailed in appeals to the public, pervaded all societies, and occasioned an uncommon ferment throughout the nation. The first Lord of the Treasury had resigned, and the other members of administration declared they only retained their situations till a new cabinet could be formed; but the arrangements were so beset with difficulties, that days and weeks elapsed without terminating the solicitude of the public. At an important and eventful crisis, the kingdom was left without an efficient or responsible administration; while confusion and discord bore sad testimony of the misery of that unconstitutional position, which, in the language of the day, was termed a ministerial interregnum. Although sensible of all the disadvantages of such a state of

25th February.

* See the proceedings in the Remembrancer, vol. xv. p. 205.

affairs, the King felt extremely reluctant to place himself in the hands of Lord North, associated with Mr. Fox and his adherents. During his long administration, Lord North had received the strongest proofs of his Majesty's favour and confidence, and of his reliance on him as a friend; and, on his expulsion from office, he had a convincing proof of the royal esteem and regard; his alliance, therefore, with Mr. Fox, who, during the greater portion of that period, had not only maintained, in the highest tones, political opinions which were most distasteful to the King, but had made personal attacks which it was impossible to forget and not easy to pardon, was extremely disagreeable. Mr. Pitt had commenced his parliamentary career in opposition, but had never maintained principles or used expressions calculated to impart a feeling of personal disrespect. He stood, by the acknowledgment of all parties, in a lofty position for talent and virtue, and the public looked to him as the person most likely and best qualified to serve and to save the state. To him, therefore, the King offered the place vacated by Lord Shelburne, with full powers to nominate his colleagues. At his age, with his talents, with a mind imbued with a lofty spirit of ambition, the proposal was full of almost irresistible allurement. He was unwilling to decide hastily, and Mr. Dundas obtained an adjournment of three days, to afford time for consideration and consultation. By far the greater number of his friends advised him to accept the offer; but, with a forbearance extremely rare at his age, with an acute and accurate regard to probabilities, he did not adopt the opinion of his amicable advisers. He saw that the powerful host of talent and influence which would be embodied against him could shake any cabinet that he could then form; and that, by a premature compliance with the wish of his sovereign, he might relieve him from a temporary difficulty, only to involve him in an infinite series of troubles; he, therefore, declined the splendid and gracious offer. In his distress, the King made separate appeals to Lord North and the Duke of Portland, but in vain; Lord North would

1783. Offer to Mr. Pitt.

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not sever himself from the connexion of Mr. Fox, and equal difficulties arose with the Duke of Portland*.

1783. 18th March. Motions on the subject. 24th March.

In this interval, the state of the country was more than once animadverted on in Parliament, and Mr. Coke, member for Norfolk, gave notice that, unless an administration was formed in three days, he would propose an address to the King. He was induced to postpone his intention; but at length, in an unusually full House, he moved a request, that his Majesty would consider the distracted and unsettled state of the empire, and comply with their wishes, by forming an administration entitled to the confidence of the people, and such as might tend to terminate the unfortunate divisions and distractions of the country†. In a long and vehement debate, the state of parties was discussed, the coalition reprobated and defended, and the motion censured by some as an invasion of the royal prerogative. The imputation of secret influence was revived, and directly applied to Mr. Jenkinson, who made an able and candid reply. The prerogative of the crown, he said, was not so limited as to proscribe any privy-councillor from the presence of his sovereign; no secret influence had ever existed; but, when the King was graciously pleased to require his attendance, he was obliged to obey the summons. He had more than once in the last five weeks been with his Majesty, but never went, except on official business, and when expressly required. The idea of secret influence was a popular trap for the multitude; it existed only in imagination, and was brought forward only for political purposes. He appealed to Lord North, with whom he had the honour of serving ten years, whether the secret influence, so insidiously hinted at, ever had existence; he claimed an explicit declaration, and from a well-founded confidence in his Lordship's innate

* Tomline, vol. i. p. 104, 109.

† When the notice was first given of this motion, a member, who disapproved of the coalition, signified his intention of adding a clause as an amendment, requesting his Majesty not to appoint any person a minister who, "by his mismanagement of public affairs, and by want of foresight and ability, when in office, had lost the confidence of the people." These words were taken from a motion of Mr. Fox against Lord North, when at the head of the Treasury. The amendment, however, was not moved. Tomline, vol i. p. 110.

principles of honour, would abide by his determination. Lord Thurlow, who was alluded to as one of the secret advisers, was equally exculpated by Mr. Jenkinson.

Lord North answered this appeal with his usual integrity and candour; disdaining to swell the popular cry against an opponent, by false or equivocal statements, he averred that, during his administration, he had never found any secret influence lurking behind the throne which frustrated his intentions. He had often received advice from Mr. Jenkinson, but never knew that he gave counsel to his Sovereign which he could not publicly justify. He extended similar testimony to Lord Thurlow, declaring that he had always found him an able, honest, and upright man, and believed him worthy of the office he filled. The motion was carried with only four dissentient voices.

The King returned a gracious answer to the address; bnt the difficulties which impeded the arrangement were not yet obviated; and the Earl of Surrey moved a resolution, declaring the interposition of the House necessary on this alarming crisis. Mr. Pitt reprobated the proposal, as conveying a disrespectful reflection on the King's promise; Lord John Cavendish and Lord North also declaring disapprobation, Lord Surrey withdrew it, substituting a motion for an address, declaring that delay in a matter so momentous as forming an administration, would tend to weaken the authority of government, retard pacific arrangements, and perpetuate distress and confusion. An acrimonious debate ensued, in which Mr. Dundas insinuated that, the Chancellor of the Exchequer having that day resigned his situation, no further difficulties would arise. Mr. Pitt had always declared that he only retained his office till a successor could be nominated; and it would not have been repugnant to the wishes of any party that he should retain his place, could other consistent arrangements have been perfected.

27th March.

31st.

The motion was withheld from a decision, and a new administration was soon announced to the House. The cabinet was composed of the Duke of Portland,

2nd April. New ministry.

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First Lord of the Treasury, Lord North and Mr. Fox, Secretaries of State, Lord John Cavendish, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Keppel, first Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Stormont, President of the Council, and the Earl of Carlisle, Lord Privy-Seal.

The great seal was given in commission to Lord Loughborough, Mr. Justice Ashhurst, and Mr. Baron Hotham*; and Lord Mansfield was appointed Speaker of the House of Lords. Lord Viscount Townshend was Master-General, Mr. Courtenay Surveyor-General, and Mr. Adam Treasurer of the Ordnance; Colonel Fitzpatrick Secretary at War; Mr. Burke Paymaster of the Forces, and Mr. Charles Townshend Treasurer of the Navy. Lord Sandwich accepted the Rangership of St. James's and Hyde Parks, the Earl of Cholmondeley was appointed Captain of the Yeomen of the Guards, the Earl of Jersey Captain of the band of Pensioners, and Lord Hinchinbrooke Master of the Buck-Hounds. Mr. Wallace and Mr. Lee regained the offices of Attorney and Solicitor-General, Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Richard Burke were Secretaries to the Treasury, and the Honourable Mr. St. John and Colonel North Under-Secretaries of State. The Vice-Royalty of Ireland was conferred on the Earl of Northington; Mr. William Windham was appointed Secretary, and Mr. Eden Vice-Treasurer of that kingdom.

Commercial intercourse with America regulated.

28th January.

One of the most interesting objects, the decision on which seemed partly suspended during the late ministerial interregnum, was the establishment of a commercial intercourse with America. This subject claimed the early attention of the legislature. Mr. Hartley having, on the day after the provisional articles were submitted to the House, recommended an instant repeal of the restraining act; but, however pressing the consideration of the subject might seem, the most eminent orators in Parliament did not appear to have formed a just and well-founded system. They rather evinced a readiness to risk the whole commer-

* The Duke of Richmond made a motion, 3rd June, to declare the appointment of Judges to act as commissioners of the great seal, an infringement of the 13th of William III; which, after a long debate, was rejected without a division.

cial welfare of the kingdom, for the sake of securing a preference in the United States, to which an undue and even ridiculous value was affixed. The ministry were blamed for not submitting to the House a project for securing the trade of America; combinations of other countries to the disadvantage of Great Britain, and frauds by the merchants of Canada and Nova Scotia, were apprehended; and it was said that not only the restraining act ought to be repealed, but the navigation laws should be made subservient to the commercial intercourse between the two countries.

Bills were accordingly brought in for repealing the restraining act, and establishing a provisional intercourse with America. The former passed without much difficulty: in discussing the other, some enlightened and judicious members gave opinions which rectified the judgment of the House on the value of American commerce, and inculcated a proper regard for the British navigation law, the trade of the West India islands, and the commercial intercourse with Russia and other nations; Lord Sheffield and Mr. Eden displayed great ability in these debates; and Lord Sheffield, through the medium of the press*, rendered an essential service to the country, by imparting minute, precise, and copious information, accompanied with sane and liberal maxims respecting general policy and colonial principles, tending at once to establish the real interests of the country, and to render her intercourse with her late colonies permanent, advantageous, and honourable to both. Finally, a temporary bill passed, which became annual, abrogating the requisition of certain instruments from ships belonging to the United States, and vesting in the King the power of regulating the commercial intercourse.

Another subject connected with America, which claimed the attention of Parliament, was the case of the loyalists. Great commiseration of these unfortu- May

* Observations on the Navigation and Commerce of Great Britain, and of the American States. They gave a greater detail of the comparative state of navigation, manufacture, and trade, than had been published before.

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nate persons was expressed in the debates on the provisional articles of peace, and the conduct of Philip III of Spain was frequently cited in reproof of the British ministry. On concluding a truce with the United States of Holland in 1609, that prince obtained for his adherents the enjoyment of their estates, which was afterwards secured to them and their heirs by the treaty of Munster in 1648; but the loyalists of America, who had foregone their all for Great Britain, had no resource but a recommendation of Congress to the provincial legislatures. Parliament was informed, in the course of the session, that, although, in literal compliance with their engagement, Congress had recommended the loyalists, they would be obliged to quit for ever the American continent, to avoid the implacable fury of their republican countrymen. They had cast off all appearance of a desire to be reconciled to these unfortunate persons; formed associations to prevent the restitution of their estates, and to impede their return. Almost all who ventured to confide in the humanity or clemency of their countrymen, and revisit their homes, were barbarously treated, beaten, robbed of their money and clothing, and forced to return. Congress took no measures to repress, they did not seem averse to these proceedings, and the recommendations promised in the treaty were not only languidly, but tardily made*. As an earnest of their further intentions, Parliament, in a committee of supply, granted to the American officers, who had served in volunteer corps, their half-pay. Some differences of opinion prevailed on the propriety of this measure, which was particularly supported by Lord Sheffield, for the purpose of securing some immediate help for the military; both sides of the House concurring in cordial and generous sentiments toward the honourable victims of persecution, an act was passed, appointing commissioners to inquire into their losses and services, with a view of making compensation.

24th June.

27th.

* Letter from Sir Guy Carleton to the Right Honourable Thomas Townshend, 27th May, 1783. State Papers.

1783.

The new ministry were obliged to negotiate a loan of twelve millions for the service of the year; and one of the ways and means for paying the interest was a small stamp duty on receipts for money paid. As it was easy to alarm the trading interest, a considerable clamour was excited, and petitions from the City of London were presented to both Houses; the ministry were sufficiently firm not to relinquish a tax which proved to be beneficial and productive; but it was an inexhaustible theme of invective.

Debates on the loan.

5th May.

Under the influence of Mr. Burke, an act was passed, amending the statute of last year for regulating the office of paymaster; and, under the auspices of Mr. Pitt, a bill passed the lower House for introducing economical reforms into the treasury offices, but was rejected by the Lords. Several acrimonious motions on the subject of pensions granted to Lord Thurlow, Colonel Barré, and other eminent public characters, displayed the activity of party without producing any permanent effect. A bill, introduced by Lord Mahon, for preventing bribery and corruption at elections, was also unsuccessful; and Alderman Sawbridge's annual motion for a reform of Parliament met with its usual fate.

Economical reforms.

30th June.

15th May.

From these efforts the public had not perhaps formed any sanguine expectations; but, ever since the failure of Mr. Pitt's motion of last year, strenuous exertions had been made to obtain strong declarations, as well from chartered and political, as from self-constituted bodies, in favour of a parliamentary reform. Many petitions were presented to the House of Commons, and, as Mr. Pitt was the known patron of the measure, attempts were not wanting to impel him to introduce it before the change of the ministry. These he evaded with great dexterity; but, when the ordinary business was completed, he obtained a call of the House, and brought forward three resolutions; first, that it was necessary to adopt measures for preventing bribery and expense at elections; second, when the majority of voters in a borough should be convicted of corruption, the borough should be disfranchised, and

Mr. Pitt's motion for a reform of Parliament.

7th May.

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the minority not convicted entitled to vote for the county; and third, that an addition should be made to the county members, and representatives of the metropolis.

In recommending his resolutions, Mr. Pitt pronounced an animated eulogy on the British constitution; while England remained under a government perfectly free, he observed, she never failed to perform exploits which dazzled the neighbouring nations. But a melancholy series of events had eclipsed the glory of Britain, exhibiting a reverse of fortune which could be accounted for only by acknowledging that, during the last fifteen years, there had been a deviation from the principles of that happy constitution under which the people had so long flourished. He then entered into a history of the efforts which of late years had been made for satisfying the people on this important subject. A spirit of speculation had gone forth, and a variety of schemes, founded on visionary and impracticable ideas of reform, were suddenly produced: it was not for him, with unhallowed hands, to touch the venerable pile of the constitution; to see it in need of repair was sufficiently melancholy; but the more he revered, the more he wished to secure its duration to the latest posterity, and the greater he felt the necessity of guarding against its decay. He had, therefore, abandoned the principle which he suggested last year; and his present object was not to innovate, but rather renew and invigorate the spirit of the constitution, without deviating materially from its present form.

Among the expedients for restoring the constitution, and excluding the influence of the Crown from Parliament, he had principally heard of three; one was to extend the right of voting for members of Parliament to all the inhabitants of the kingdom indiscriminately. This proposition was founded on the principle that men ought only to be governed by laws to which they had given their consent; but he utterly rejected and condemned it as a libel on the wisdom of those renowned ancestors, who, in the fulness of their

wisdom, formed the constitution for the government of freemen, not of slaves. If this doctrine should prevail, all who voted for unsuccessful candidates must be slaves, and members must be slaves to laws made against their will and in repugnance to their votes. Members once chosen were, in effect, representatives of the people, including those who did not vote, and even those whose suffrages were against them; the proposed innovation would infer that no House of Commons ever had been a true and constitutional representation of the people; for no House of Commons had been, or could be, elected by *all* the men in the kingdom. Another plan was to disfranchise all those which in common speech were termed *rotten boroughs*. The project was specious; but, though he considered them as deformities which disfigured the fabric of the constitution, he feared they could not be removed without endangering the whole pile. He was unwilling to dissolve, but would endeavour to restrain them, as much as possible, from injuring the constitution. This brought him to the third plan, that of adding to the House a certain number of members returned by the counties and the metropolis; and, as these members appeared least liable to the influence of corruption, he approved the measure, and, although he would not fix a specific number in his motion, it ought not, in his opinion, to be less than a hundred. The House would then be more numerous than could be wished; but better it should be so, than the liberties of the country endangered by the baleful influence of the Crown; and the disfranchisement of boroughs, where the voters were convicted of corruption, would reduce, by degrees, the number of members of Parliament to a proper standard.

Mr. Thomas Pitt supported the motion: but, thinking a hundred additional members too many, he proposed that the increase should be only one representative for each county in England and Wales. Deprecating all mirepresentations which might arise from his peculiar situation, as proprietor of Old Sarum, he requested leave to surrender it into the hands of Parliament as

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a voluntary sacrifice, as a victim to be offered up at the shrine of the constitution. Should the tender be accepted, he wished to recommend that the power of returning two members should be transferred to the proprietors of the Bank of England.

Mr. Fox also argued in favour of the motion, but treated with derision the offer of Mr. Thomas Pitt, who, he said, had, notwithstanding his fine flourishes, made an offer which he knew would not be accepted. It had a great sound, but its real was far inferior to its apparent merit.

Mr. Dundas gave his reasons for voting in support of the resolutions; but both he and Mr. Thomas Pitt incurred the ridicule of Mr. Sheridan, as new proselytes to Mr. Pitt.

While the advocates of the measure were thus discordant among themselves, its opponents were more consistent. Mr. Powys, the first speaker on that side, described the artifices used to inflame the public expectation and procure petitions; he analyzed the resolutions of the county meetings and the petitions before the House, and proved that the measures proposed were not qualified to satisfy the petitioners. He shewed, from the publications of two associations, called the Constitutional Society and the Quintuple Alliance, that universal suffrage alone could be adequate to their pretensions. The whole number of petitioners did not exceed twenty thousand; and Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield, Leeds, and Halifax, great unrepresented manufacturing towns, were not on the list. The flowers of oratory had been employed in decorating those happy, virtuous, halcyon days, when England was so blessed in a chaste and equal representation; but he wished to be reminded in whose reign that uncorrupt and virtuous representation, and at what period of history that perfect equality, existed.

Lord North opposed the motion, in a speech equally distinguished for brilliant wit and solid argument. On the difference of opinion respecting the number of additional knights of the shire to be returned, he used a sportive allusion to the tragedy of King Lear;

where the abdicated monarch requires in his train a hundred knights, one of his daughters consents to allow him fifty; but I, he said, like the other daughter, will not consent to one, "no not one." The petitions which had been obtained proceeded from an inconsiderable minority in each county. That from Yorkshire, great and extensive as it was, came recommended only by nine thousand names; that of Suffolk was signed only by the sheriff; a proof that the sheriff of Suffolk wished for reform, but not that it was desired by the people. From a number so comparatively small as twenty thousand names subscribed to the petitions, was it credible that the sense of the whole people of England could be collected? And how had those petitions been obtained? Not from the public, but a prejudiced part of the public. The assizes were held twice, the sessions four times, in every year; on those occasions the people met in the most fair and indiscriminate manner; but were the signatures to petitions taken then? No; county meetings, as they were called, were held; projectors with set speeches and ready-framed petitions came prepared to meet a number of prejudiced people, invited to sign what was ready for their signature: the question was begged or borrowed, or hospitably stolen, to accommodate the craving appetites of such craving guests. Those who neither liked the invitation nor the fare, prudently remained at home; and the House was to decide whether they would pay respect to the few reformers or the contented multitude.

Alluding to an insinuation, that bad ministers were continued in office contrary to the voice of the people, by the over-ruling influence of the Crown, Lord North said, "I will not affect to think the stroke is not levelled "at me; but, I trust, the candid and discerning part of "the House will see that the attack is most unjust. I "was not, when first honoured with office, a minister of "chance, or a creature of whom Parliament had no ex-"perience. I was found among you. I had been long "known to you; I obtained your support; when that "support was withdrawn, I ceased to be a minister. I "was the creature of Parliament in my rise; when I

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" fell, I was its victim. I came among you without con-
" nexion; here I was first known; you raised me up,
" you pulled me down. I have been the creature of
" your opinion and your power; and the history of my
" political life is one proof, which will stand against and
" overturn the wild assertion, that there is a corrupt in-
" fluence in the crown, which destroys the independence
" of this House. Does my history shew the undue in-
" fluence of the crown? Or does it not, on the contrary,
" prove the potent efficacy of the public voice? If then
" that voice is so powerful as to remove whatever may
" be displeasing to the opinions of the country, what
" need is there of this paraded reformation?" " One
" gentleman," he proceeded, " says, give the people
" fifty knights, and then make your stand.—I oppose
" this idea—begin with innovation, and there is no
" knowing where you will stop—like the gravity of a
" sinking body, its velocity increases in proportion to its
" weight. The addition of one hundred, or even of fifty
" county members, would give a decided superiority to
" the landed interest over the commercial; and it is the
" beauty of the constitution of the House of Commons,
" that, like the general fabric of the British legislature,
" it provides for and preserves the due balance between
" the several great interests of the empire, the landed,
" the commercial, and the monied. But let us not begin,
" *Principiis obsta.* Let us act like men. We are not
" the deputies, but the representatives of the people:
" we are not to refer to them before we determine. We
" stand here as they would stand; to use our own dis-
" cretion, without seeking any other guidance under
" heaven. In a word, as no defect in the constitution
" has been proved, as we have heard nothing but decla-
" mation and surmise, to warrant so awful and so im-
" portant a measure as an innovation on the form of
" that venerable palladium which ages have sanctified,
" let me conjure you to reject—what, if adopted, must
" inevitably lead to ruin."

The majority against the motion was one hundred and forty-four*.

* 293 to 149.

1783.

Affairs of Ireland.

Although the public attention was chiefly absorbed by the terms of peace, the state of parties, and other topics, another object claimed the early interference of Parliament. Since the repeal of the declaratory act of George I, the Irish had been instigated to insist on further concessions, and cavil at the restrictions still supposed to remain. Mr. Flood insisted that the British government did not, by abrogating that statute, disclaim the principle on which it was founded, and an express renunciation was necessary. A long altercation ensued between him and Mr. Grattan, who had pledged himself to the English ministry that a simple repeal would be sufficient. The contest did not much agitate the public mind; but the popular opinion, though at first agreeing with that of Mr. Grattan, afterward inclined in favour of Mr. Flood. The question subsided; but Lord Temple, who succeeded the Duke of Portland, during whose administration the discussion arose, thinking it right that it should be decisively settled, recommended a bill of renunciation. The King mentioned the affairs of Ireland in the speech from the throne; and before the recess, Colonel Fitzpatrick called the attention of ministers to the insufficiency of the repealing act. He founded his application on a recent decision of the Court of King's Bench in England, on a long depending writ of error, brought before the repeal of the statute of George I, which the Court had been obliged, by the course of legal proceeding, to determine, but which served as a theme for popular animadversion.

19th Dec.

On the first day of transacting business after the recess, Mr. Townshend, the Secretary of State, moved for leave to bring in a bill for removing doubts concerning the legislative rights of the Parliament and Courts of Ireland, and preventing the adjudication of any writ of error or appeal from that kingdom in Great Britain. The debate did not originate in any opposition to the motion, but in the desire of many members to explain their political sentiments respecting Ireland, and the conduct of the preceding and present administrations, which had given vigour to discon-

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tent, and rendered the people of that country incapable of being satisfied with moderate concessions; and Mr. Pitt observed that the present measure was to be considered as arising out of the former, and tending to complete it. The debates in the subsequent stages of the bill were animated, and involved a discussion, whether treasons committed in Ireland could be tried in Great Britain, under the statute of Henry VIII? the prevailing opinion was in favour of the affirmative, that law having been confirmed by an Irish statute, and the bill passed.

19th Feb. and 5th March.

Before its arrival in the upper House, Mr. Townshend was created a peer, by the title of Lord Sydney, and again appeared the promoter of the measure. A long and acrimonious debate was maintained on the second reading; but it passed without a division*.

4th March. 14th April.

Another measure of a popular nature was slightly discussed in the House of Commons. A bill for regulating the slave trade having been introduced, the Quakers took the opportunity, by a petition which Sir Cecil Wray presented, to implore of Parliament the total abolition of the traffic; but, after a short debate, the petition, supported by Lord North, was ordered, on account of the advanced period of the session, to be laid on the table†. The incident claims a degree of notice which in itself it would not deserve, as the first effort on a subject which for more than half a century had engaged the attention of those benevolent sectaries, which afterward occasioned strenuous exertions, and produced violent diversities of opinion, as well in Parliament as among the public.

17th June. First Petition for abolishing the slave trade.

The only remaining subject of importance, was a message from the King to both Houses, requiring a separate establishment for the Prince of Wales, who was now arrived at the age of majority. His Majesty agreed to allow fifty thousand pounds out of the civil list; but, in consideration that the revenue, so reduced, could not bear any further burden, Parliament granted

23rd. Separate establishment of the Prince of Wales.

25th.

* Plowden, vol. ii. p. 7.
† Clarkson's History of the Abolition of the Slave Trade, vol. i. c. 4.

to the King an aid of sixty thousand pounds to equip the Prince in a manner suited to his dignity.

In terminating the session, the King thanked the House of Commons for this act of liberality, and expressed regret at not being able to announce the completion of the definitive treaties. 17th July. Close of the Session.

This cause of regret was soon removed; for, after the signature of preliminaries, every difficulty vanished, except those which arose from the unsettled state of the British government, and those which originated in a few captures made after the commencement of negotiations. For the sake of compliment, the Emperor of Germany and Empress of Russia were admitted as mediators; but the compacts were arranged without their assistance, though formally sanctioned by the declaratory attestation of their ministers. Their favorite project of a neutral code was no longer insisted on; its fallacy as a system was ascertained by experience; to every belligerent it contained advantages and injuries, and according to their prevalence it would be sustained or resisted. England would have suffered severely from it in the war as actually conducted; but had a separate treaty been concluded with America or any other power, her interest would have been different, and Russia and Germany, now meditating enterprizes against the Porte, would have been extremely mortified at the enforcement of their own system. Definitive treaty of peace executed.

Holland, under the influence of France, acceded to preliminaries on the basis of mutual restitution, except the town of Negapatam, which was ceded to Great Britain. In the course of the negotiation, she had alternately displayed presumptuous confidence, humble submission, or sullen ill-humour, in proportion as the promises, the neglect, or the commands of France were exhibited toward her. With great reluctance, she consented to leave Negapatam in the hands of Great Britain, vainly offering a sum of money for its restitution. The definitive treaties with France, Spain, and America, were executed on the ensuing day. 2nd Sept. 3rd Sept.

CHAPTER THE FIFTIETH.

1765—1775.

India.—Its affairs become of great importance.—Probable effect of the appointment of supervisors.—Extent of British territory. — New Act of Parliament for the government of India—its objects and provisions.—Mr. Hastings—his services and character.—Native powers.— The Mogul.—The Mahrattas.—Other powers.—Oude and the Rohillas.—The Mysore and Hyder Ally.—Policy of the English Government.—State of Benares.—Death of Bulwant Sing.—Cheyt Sing established as his successor.—Bad faith of the nabob Sujah-ul-Dowlah.—Mr. Hastings goes to Benares and forms a treaty.—State of the Mogul, Shah Allum—his desire to be crowned at Delhi—opposed by the British Government—he forms an alliance with the Mahrattas — goes to Delhi—makes war on the Rohillas—is betrayed by the Mahrattas—who take Delhi—plunder and imprison him.—Alarm of the Vizier of Oude—he applies to the Bengal government—cedes Korah.—The Mogul's pension discontinued.—Mr. Hastings goes to Benares—conduct of Shah Allum—treaty with the Vizier—Observations on Mr. Hastings's vindication of his proceedings—which are approved by the Company.—Further views of the Vizier. — Mr. Hastings returns to Calcutta.—Projects of the Vizier against the Rohillas—assisted by the English—successful operations —the Rohillas subdued.—Arrears from the Vizier—he still requires the British troops—objections of Colonel Champion—conduct of the Vizier toward the family of Hafez—campaign renewed—capture of Patter Ghur—arrangement with Nudjif Khan—proposals of Fyzoolah Khan—complaints of Colonel Champion.—Peace with the Rohillas.—Transactions in Bombay.—Demand on the Nabob of Broach —final arrangement—censured by the Company.—Capture of Broach.—Treaty. Disapprobation of the Company.

Affairs of India.

It now becomes necessary to advert to the affairs of India, which assumed, during the contest with America and the confederated powers of Europe, a great and unexpected importance. The retrospect and narrative must be of some length, as they involve questions both with the natives and the belligerent powers, and comprize events and combinations which threatened the annihilation of the British name and authority. Not from hostile opposition alone did these perils arise; the nature of our acquisitions, the feebleness of a new government, the inaptitude of the natives to conform to systems never before tried or understood, and the vigorous, not to say factious, struggles of those to whom the powers of government were delegated, all created and increased the pressure of difficulty and danger.

Supervisors.

Errors and defects in the existing system had called for the nomination of supervisors; but the loss of them, which was never accounted for*, prevented the nation from ascertaining by experience the extent of their utility. Extensive benefit could hardly be expected; they might have disclosed some abuses, but their representations must have been encountered by contradictions and explanations; the known objects of their mission would render their position in society unpleasant; and it is not improbable that, after a short struggle, they would have acquiesced in a state of things which they could not effectually alter, and desisted from remonstrances productive of doubt and discussion, rather than decision and resolution at home; while, in India, they would have exasperated against them many whom it must have been their interest and their desire to conciliate.

Extent of British territory.

The territory submitted to British dominion remained in 1773 as it had been established by the treaty of 1765, comprehending Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, with Madras and its dependencies in the east, Bombay, on the west side of the continent, and Bencoolen, in the island of Sumatra. These dominions, large, rich,

* See Chapters 16 and 20

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and populous, had been intirely under the government of the East India Company, who provided for their internal management and military protection, until the magnitude of the object, the calls of justice, and the demands of necessity, induced government to interfere; and the researches and reports of the two committees, in 1773, produced a legislative enactment, from which great benefits were expected both to the natives and to Great Britain*.

New Act for the government of India.

The principal measures which the statute† attempted to effect at home were the reform and new modelling of the courts of proprietors and directors. In India, it provided a court of justice capable of protecting the natives from oppression; a general council in Bengal, with authority extending, in many particulars, over all the settlements; and the constant communication with the ministers of the crown was to enable them, through the medium of Parliament, to act most efficaciously for the welfare and interest of all parties, at home and abroad.

How much opposition was offered against the enactments which affected the constitution of the directors, and how it was surmounted by government, has already been related; their utility and probable success were never doubtful‡. Of the remaining parts of the plan, a judgment could only be derived from time and experience.

At Bengal, a governor-general, with a council of four members, was to exercise the authority of the state; the majority present deciding all questions. Their powers were not precisely defined, but they extended over all questions of peace and war, foreign alliance and internal regulation. This council was supreme in India: Madras and Bombay had similar establishments; but they were subordinate. The members were strictly enjoined not to receive presents from the natives. The governor-general, members of council,

* These subjects are generally noticed in the preceding Chapters of this History, and particularly Chapters 20 and 44.

† 13 George III c. 63.

‡ See Chapter 20.

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and judges, were restrained from entering into commercial dealings or transactions, either for themselves or others; and on this point the directions of the statute were enforced by instructions from the Company*.

1771. April. Mr. Hastings.

Nearly two years before the operation of the new law, Mr. John Cartier, a highly valued servant of the Company, was removed from the situation of President of the Council and Governor of Bengal, for disobedience of orders; and Mr. Hastings was appointed his successor†. From this nomination flattering presages were formed. Mr. Hastings had risen to his eminent station by long and meritorious services, commencing in 1750: he had acquired the languages of the country; and, being an accurate observer, was often an useful adviser in the memorable transactions of that eventful period. He was a member of the council during Mr. Vansittart's administration, and second in that of Madras from 1770 until he was called to supersede Mr. Cartier. His important services were evidently the result of a vigorous mind and enlarged understanding; and the Company had acknowledged them in terms of grateful commendation‡. He was a scholar of considerable attainments, of a brave and undaunted spirit, resolute in determination and firm to his purpose. Such qualities were evidently required in the government of India; that they should exist without the counterpoise of some faults was not to be expected; the effects resulting from both, form an interesting passage in history; and some account of them must be given, although the details would occupy a separate and extensive work.

Native powers.

The great native powers who could affect the prosperity of the British establishment were few, and it was supposed that they might rather be conciliated by policy, or balanced against each other in mutual opposition, than subdued or coerced by military force. The

The Mogul.

* Beside the act of Parliament already mentioned, see the Ninth Report of the Select Committee in 1781; Rep. vol. vi. p. 45; Malcolm's Sketch of the Political History of India, p. 37.

† Fifth Report of the Select Committee, 1782; Rep. vol. v. pp. 671, 816.

‡ Fifth Report of the Committee of Secrecy, 1782; Appendix, No. 4; Rep. vol. vii. p. 811.

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Mogul, whose dominion was reduced to a mere name, was yet a considerable burthen on the British government, from the necessity of protecting the provinces assigned, and the payment of the pension assured to him by treaty*. The Mahrattas were the power really formidable. Brave, enterprizing, and restless, they had obtained land and tribute from the Moguls during their authority, and, since its decay, had rendered themselves formidable throughout India. Their disposition was restless and rapacious, and their powerful cavalry enabled them to levy enormous contributions, and to hold in awe all the territorial governments around†.

The Mahrattas.

Other powers.

The Nabobs, the Nabob-Vizier of Oude, the Rohillas, and other potentates, might perhaps, if united, have counterbalanced the Mahratta nation; but there is ever a slowness and reluctance in states to form useful confederacies, and, in India, where possession, not being founded on right, was necessarily insecure, and where the hope of aggrandizement led so many to covet the plunder of their less powerful neighbours, confidence could never be well established, nor could any potentate rely on the continued and effective co-operation of allies. One power indeed there was, at this period struggling into importance rather than possessed of it, which was destined in a few years, under the able guidance of a vigorous and enterprizing chief, to become for a time arbiter of events, and to suspend in tremulous uncertainty the fate of the British empire in India. This state was Mysore, and the chief, the renowned Hyder Ally‡. If the military force of this chieftain was not large, it had the inestimable advantage of discipline, and of a leader whose never-failing activity, prudence, and bravery, gave to all events their most propitious turn, and to all contingencies their most beneficial influence. His dominions

The Mysore.

* See Chapter 12.

† On the subject of the Mahratta power, its origin and progress, see an ample and instructive detail in the Seventh Report of the Committee of Secrecy, in 1782. See also the Annual Register, vol. xxv. c. 1.

‡ See Chap 16.

were the kingdom of Mysore, the country of Bangalore, the tributary sovereignty over part of the Carnatic, from Amboor to Madura, Travancore, and the coast of Malabar, the country of Bellipour, the kingdom of Canara, and the Molucca islands*. The territories he exclusively possessed were not large, but compact and well defended by their natural strength; and his sovereignty, if disputable in its origin, was daily acquiring firmness and consolidation from the effect of time, and from his lofty and enterprizing character.

Policy of the English government.

In the midst of such powers, the conduct of the British government should have been extremely temperate and cautious. To secure what they possessed; to watch, without unnecessarily interfering, the operations of the natives, and to acquire respect by occasional and timely interposition, was their obvious, and seems to have been their intended, policy.

State of Benares.

Before he was invested with the office of governor-general, Mr. Hastings had directed his attention to the province of Benares, a country enjoying a lenient government, great appearances of prosperity, and forming the abode of a mixed population of Mahomedans and Hindoos, among whom were many wealthy merchants and bankers. The chief city, called Benares, was peculiarly favoured. Its supposed sanctity rendered it the resort of the pious, the aged, and the unhealthy; Hindoos from all quarters giving to the inhabitants a continual influx of wealth†. At the treaty of 1765, when Sujah ul Dowlah, Nabob of Oude, after protecting Cossim Ally, and making an unsuccessful war upon the English, was admitted to moderate, and even advantageous, terms of peace‡.

Death of Bulwaut Sing

Bulwaut Sing, the Rajah of Benares, a dependent on the Nabob, but who had shewn a disposition intirely opposite to that of his patron, became an object of the victor's care, and the security of his possessions was intended to be made a clear and positive stipulation. By

* See the History of Ayder Ali Khan, translated from the French, vol. ii. p. 5.

† Papers on Mr. Hastings's impeachment, vol. ii. p. 1277.

‡ See Chapters 11 and 12.

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some negligence on the part of the English negotiators, and perhaps some contrivance on that of the Nabob-Vizier, the terms were limited to the person of the Rajah, and not extended to his family or successor. On the death of Bulivaut Sing, the Nabob attempted to enforce the letter, in opposition to the spirit, of the treaty; but the government of Bengal, considering that the Company had guaranteed the terms of the compact, according to its genuine intent, remonstrated against the proceeding; a negotiation was confided to Colonel Harper, who, at the expense of a pecuniary sacrifice on the part of Cheyt Sing, the young Rajah, induced the encroaching Vizier to leave him in full possession of his dominions, and to bind himself, by solemn engagements, not to disturb his quiet by any future claims. Little confidence could be placed in Sujah ul Dowlah: in a short time, he displayed evil intentions toward the Rajah; and, on a full assurance of the circumstances, Mr. Hastings found it necessary to repair in person to the court of the Nabob-Vizier, from whom he obtained explanations and arrangements with respect to revenue, troops, and territory, of great importance to the Company; at the same time that he settled the disputes concerning Benares by a treaty, to which, as President of the Council of Bengal, he himself became a party.

Cheyt Sing established as his successor.

Bad faith of the Nabob.

Mr. Hastings goes to Benares.

State of Shah Allum.

His desire to be crowned.

Shah Allum, the nominal Sovereign, possessed the title, but none of the power of Mogul. The servants of the empire, having secured to themselves the valuable dependencies and revenues, had renounced the subordination of vassals, and assumed an independent greatness, in which they were able to maintain themselves. Yet the fallen and powerless Emperor adhered tenaciously to the shew and pomp of sovereignty. Insensible to the disgrace which would attend his appearance in the city where his ancestors had ruled, upward of three centuries, with unbounded sway, he longed, although in circumstances of diminished grandeur and authority, for the ceremony of a coronation in Delhi. The British government opposed the project, and, from respect or fear, the Mogul abstained nearly

Opposed by the British government.

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seven years from putting it in execution, residing at Allahabad, and enjoying in splendour the ample revenue secured to him by treaty*. Thus he might have passed the remainder of his days; but, in an evil hour, he yielded to the advice of selfish and ambitious counsellors, and accepted the assistance insidiously proffered by the Mahrattas to execute his darling plan. By great exertions, he raised a force of sixteen thousand men, a portion of them being Sepoys, trained after the European method, and set out for his capital. On the way, he was met by an ambassador from the Mahratta chiefs, who imposed on him hard and arbitrary conditions, as the reward for their assistance. He entered Delhi, escorted by these selfish and treacherous allies, with a shew of grandeur insufficient to veil the obvious fact, that he came there a "mere poli- "tical pageant, set up by a selfish and interested "party†."

1771. He forms an alliance with the Mahrattas.

25th Dec. Goes to Delhi.

For a few days only, he was allowed to enjoy this delusive pomp: he was led to war against the Rohillas, and to the devastation of the territory belonging to the family of Najib ul Dowlah, a faithful adherent of the Mogul throne. Success attended the enterprize. Zabita Khan, the son of Najib, unable to offer effectual resistance in the field, retired to Patter-Ghur, his capital, which was assailed and taken; and the Mahrattas, regardless of their Mogul's remonstrances, ravaged the adjacent country, and retained to themselves all the plunder attending their success. The Emperor retired in disgust to Delhi, and the Mahrattas most perfidiously entered into a treaty with Zabita Khan, engaging for a sum of money to compel the Emperor to restore his territory, and confer on him his father's office. Shah Allum resisting this arrangement, the Mahrattas marched against Delhi, routed the Mogul's troops, forced the gates of the city, and, entering as conquerors, reduced their late ally to the state of a mere engine in their hands. All profession of respect for his person, or deference to his will, was renounced;

He makes war on the Rohillas.

Is betrayed by the Mahrattas;

who take Delhi.

1772. 22nd Dec.

* See Chapter 12.

† Fifth Report of the Committee of Secrecy, vol. vii. p. 725.

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they forced from him a grant of the country of Korah and the part of Allahabad settled on him by treaty*; and to appoint Zabita Khan buckshy (treasurer) of the empire, with the proprietary of the lands usually annexed to that office. The Mogul was also required to make over all the country conquered from the Jauts, to pay to the victors the balance of the sums he had promised as the price of their ill-starred alliance, and to remain constantly under their protection, or, in plainer terms, to be their prisoner.

Plunder and imprison him.

1773. January.

The Vizier of Oude, alarmed at the accession to the power of the Mahrattas, repented his not having lent timely assistance to the Rohillas. Considering the cession of the provinces as a nullity, he made eager and vigorous preparations for defence against the aggressions which he anticipated, and implored assistance from Bengal. That government had not seen with indifference the progress of events; but, although deeply interested in the result, was not desirous of interfering rashly, and the less, from the known character of the Vizier, whose practice it was, where powers opposed each other, to treat with both and adhere to neither†. The Mahrattas, without delay, declared their intention to possess themselves of the ceded countries, and required the Vizier to withdraw his troops. Complying in part with the request which had been made to them, the British government instructed Colonel Champion to throw an adequate garrison into the Fort of Allahabad, and sent a battalion, under Sir Robert Barker, to occupy the province of Korah. The Vizier, to shew his gratitude, ceded to the English the province in question, so far as he had jurisdiction in it, and agreed to pay an ample monthly subsidy as an indemnity for their expenses. Possession was taken in the name of the Company, acting as the allies of Shah Allum, and Sir Robert Barker was directed to maintain it; to

Alarm of the Vizier of Oude.

Applies to the Bengal government.

March.

Cession of Korah.

* It is said that, by a secret treaty, the cession of these territories was granted as a condition for the aid of the Mahrattas. Franklin's History of Shah Allum, p. 34

† Fifth Report of the Committee of Secrecy, Appendix 18; Reports, vol. vii. p. 837.

fight the Mahrattas if necessary, but not to carry hostility to any considerable distance beyond the boundary of Korah*.

The Mogul's pension discontinued.

The Bengal government also resolved to withhold the Mogul's pension, upon the principle that, while a passive instrument in the hands of the Mahrattas, his acts could not be valid, nor could their treaty be affected by arrangements in which he exercised no free will. This reasoning received confirmation from a letter shortly afterward written by the misguided prince himself. He regretted his inattention to the advice of the government, from neglecting which he had fallen helpless into the hands of the Mahrattas; suggested the propriety of giving them admission into Korah, on condition of their returning home; and, when they should have retired, he and his whole family would join the English government, and execute whatever might be advisable†. No act of hostility ensued; the Mahrattas, from the opposite side of the river, viewed the British army, and returned home.

May.

Mr. Hastings goes to Benares.

When the apprehension of danger was removed, the Vizier shewed his desire of aggrandizing himself at the expense of the Rohillas; and the necessity of adjusting the claims of all parties, with respect to the ceded provinces, obliged Mr. Hastings again to visit Benares. In the course of his journey he repeatedly wrote to Shah Allum, stating his objects, and advising him to depute some person competent to treat on his affairs; but, instead of following this counsel, the prince merely wrote letters, demanding the balance of his tribute, regular payment for the future, and the restitution of his provinces. Such demands could not be complied with. Had the provinces been restored, the Mogul was confessedly unable to retain them by his own strength; the British government must have incurred all the charge, and put forth all the exertion, necessary for that purpose, without any indemnity, or

Conduct of the Mogul.

* Fifth Report of the Committee of Secrecy, Appendix 18; Reports, vol. vii. p. 862.

† Fifth Report of the Committee of Secrecy, Appendix 18; Reports, vol. vii. p. 836. Franklin's Life of Shah Allum, Chapters 2 and 3.

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have ceded them nominally to the Emperor, but really to the Mahrattas. Policy and positive instructions from home* equally forbad the governor to add them to the British territory; and he therefore entered into a treaty with the Vizier for yielding them up to him.

Treaty with the Vizier.

Sept.

At first, Mr. Hastings proposed, but without intending to insist on it, that the provinces should be exchanged for the dominions of Cheyt Sing; but Sujah ul Dowlah declared that, although he must submit to what he had no power to dispute, he would never willingly consent "to part with a span of his territory." He desired the provinces of Korah and Allahabad, that he might have the credit of re-possessing all the lands which he had inherited from his father, and his wish would be completely frustrated by any exchange. Yielding to this objection, Mr. Hastings acceded to a treaty which secured to the Rajah, Cheyt Sing, a confirmation of the zemindary of Gazpoor, with its dependencies, on advantageous conditions, the payment to the Company of fifty lacks of rupees (£625,000), twenty immediately, and the remainder at the end of one and two years, and an allowance of two lacks and ten thousand rupees (£26,250) per month, when the troops of the Company should be sent to his assistance. Mr.

10th Sept.

Hastings, in his dispatch to the Court of Directors, describes the advantages of the treaty to be a very seasonable supply of ready money; an addition to the current specie of the provinces; an increase of the Vizier's dependence on the Company's protection; a relief from the difficulty and burthen of maintaining a territory so remote, for the Mogul who had resigned, against the Vizier who claimed and would have struggled for it; and finally a considerable saving in military expenses, with greater security to the Company's possessions.

Observations.

It is much more easy to agree with Mr. Hastings in the advantages to be gained by the British government, the Vizier, and Cheyt Sing, by this arrangement,

* Instructions of the Company, dated 11th May, 1769, par. 7, 8, 10. Referred to, Rep. 7, p. 881.

than to discover its justice toward the unfortunate sovereign of the empire. It may have been prudent and proper to prevent the transfer of the provinces to the Mahrattas, already too turbulent for the peace, and too powerful for the safety, of other states. It may have been a justifiable measure to abstain from paying to Shah Allum a large annual stipend, which would certainly be used in augmenting the resources and furnishing means for military exertion to the obnoxious power; but it does not seem just to have assumed the absolute disposal of the provinces, and received the purchase-money for our own use, and at the same time suppressed for ever the pension which an unfortunate and degraded prince had a right to claim. Mr. Hastings explains and vindicates the transaction in the following terms.

Mr. Hastings's vindication of his proceedings.

"Whatever policy suggested the first idea of the "tribute, and whatever title he may be conceived to "have had to the payment of it while he remained "under our protection, and united his fortune with "ours, his late conduct has forfeited every claim to it, "and made it even dangerous to allow it, even if the "resources of Bengal and the exigencies of the Com-"pany could any longer admit of it. Our conduct "towards him has certainly afforded matter of admi-"ration to the whole people of Indostan, whether they "construe it as the effect of a mistaken principle of "duty, the just return of benefits received, or attribute "it to some hidden cause: we have persevered, with "a fidelity unknown to them, in unshaken allegi-"ance to a pageant of our own creation, and lavished "on him the wealth of this country, which is its blood, "although not one of his own natural subjects has ever "afforded him the least pledge of voluntary obedience; "although our constituents have been compelled to "withhold the legal claims of our own sovereign; "although we have loaded them with an accumulated "debt of a crose and a half of rupees (£1,875,000), "almost the exact amount of the sums remitted, for the "use of a man who, in return, has ungratefully desert-"ed, and since headed armies against, us. It is un-

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"just to argue, in support of his pretensions on the "Company, that the tribute is no more than a reason- "able acknowledgment for the favour which they re- "ceived from him in the grant of the Dewanny: they "gave him all! they received nothing from him but a "presumptuous gift of what was not his to give, but "what they had already acquired by their own power, "the same power to which he was indebted for his "crown, and even for his existence*." Whatever weight may now be attributed to these arguments, the Company expressed a full approbation of Mr. Hastings's proceedings†, which they never retracted.

Further views of the Vizier.

On the completion of this arrangement, some phantoms of ambition and avarice crossed the mind of the Vizier. He requested assistance of an English force to put him in possession of the Rohilla country, lying north of his dominions and east of the Ganges. He was anxious to recover from that people forty lacks of rupees (£500,000), which he alleged to be due; and he cited many grievances under which he laboured‡. He insisted on his right to the balance of the Mogul's tuncaws (orders or drafts) on the treasury of Moorshedabad, and demanded pay for a battalion of sepoys, which he had furnished for the Company's service. Some of these projects were overruled by the unanswerable arguments of expense and want of force; one demand was compromised, and another adjourned; and thus the affair terminated with great appearances of amity and mutual satisfaction. The Vizier frequently expressed his joy at the meeting which had taken place, and the friendly and confidential intercourse which it had tended to establish. The council were also sanguine in believing that the Mahrattas, observing the concert between the Company and the Vizier, and the steady system on which they acted, would desist in future from alarming the frontiers and threatening in-

* Mr. Hastings to the Council at Calcutta. Fifth Report of the Committee of Secrecy, Appendix 19; Rep. vol. vii.

† Same volume, p. 738, vol. viii. p. 1.

‡ See his statement. Fifth Report of the Committee of Secrecy, Appendix 19; Rep. vol. vii. p. 885.

vasion*. Mr. Hastings, in his private judgment, did not acquiesce in such hopes; doubting the sincerity of the Vizier, he obtained permission, and appointed Mr. Nathaniel Middleton as British resident at Benares; and a promise was given, although its sincerity was doubted, that M. Gentil, a French agent, should be dismissed from that city. On his return to Calcutta, his arrangements received the full approbation of the Council, which was ratified by the Court of Directors†.

12th Oct. Projects of the Vizier against the Rohillas.

Tranquillity was not yet effectually restored. Sujah ul Dowlah soon extended his views to the acquisition of a large portion of the Rohilla country, as a protection against the incursions of the Mahrattas. He also claimed from Hafez Rhamet Khan, a Rohilla chief, whose territories lay contiguous to his own, and to the ceded province of Korah, forty lacks of rupees (£500,000), which he was determined to recover, or to seize the dominions of the defaulter. This claim and these views had been submitted to Mr. Hastings at Benares, and were acceded to in the first draft of the treaty, but afterward withdrawn by Sujah ul Dowlah, on a promise that, when it suited the affairs of the Company, he should obtain full satisfaction.

Assistance of the English claimed,

On the ground of this understanding, the Vizier claimed from the government at Calcutta the assistance of a brigade, to punish and exterminate the Rohillas. This requisition could only be arranged by means of a personal interview; and Mr. Hastings was three months at Benares adjusting terms with the Vizier. The result was that assistance should be granted against the Rohillas, but not for attacking the Daob, or country between the Jumna and the Ganges, beyond the province of Korah, and offered the required aid, subject to this restriction.

26th,

and granted.

Successful Operations.

Pending the discussion, the Vizier had executed his plan. The Mahrattas having been called into the Deccan, he entered the Daob, and besieged some forts. At first, he declined the qualified aid of the British

9th Nov. 1774.

17th January.

* Letter from the Governor and Council to the Court of Directors. Fifth Report of the Committee of Secrecy, Appendix 2; Rep. vol. vii. p. 893.

† Fifth Report, ubi supra.

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troops; but afterward retracted. The united operations were eminently successful. Colonel Champion, the British commander, aided by five battalions of the Vizier's regulars, and about four thousand matchlocks, was opposed to the Rohilla force of forty thousand men, under Hafez Khan. By a judicious feint, he drew them from behind Cutterah, crossed the Gurra river, and, although the Rohillas made a brave resistance, took their camp, with the tents standing, put them intirely to the rout, killing about two thousand, and among them Hafez himself. When the victory was complete, a few horse, sent by the Nabob, pursued the enemy, took much plunder in money, elephants, camels, and other property, and even secured to themselves the effects found in the camp; while the British troops, who had surprised it, stood in regular order in their ranks, seeing their allies enriched with booty, while to them belonged the honour of the day. In consequence of this victory, the whole of Hafez Rhamet's country, with Ali and Bissolie, fell into the possession of Sujah ul Dowlah, completing, as Colonel Champion considered, the conquest of the Rohilla territory*.

Feb. and March. 23rd. April

The Rohillas subdued.

Satisfied with his progress, the Vizier informed Colonel Champion that he should have no further service for the troops till after the rainy season; and the Governor, in announcing the event, congratulated the Company on the happy and speedy accomplishment of the undertaking, and on their right to the sum stipulated for the service†.

It appears that the Vizier regularly paid the monthly subsidy for the extra charge of the brigade, and gave an assignment on his treasury at Fyzabad for the fifteen lacks (£187,500) due for the second payment, on account of the cession of Korah and Allahabad‡; but the forty lacks (£500,000), stipulated for the more recent services, were not so readily obtained. Colonel Champion, who viewed the Vizier and his pro-

* Fifth Report of the Committee of Secrecy, Appendix 26; Rep. vol. vii. p. 912.

† Fifth Report, ubi supra, Appendix 27.

‡ Fifth Report, p. 914. Letter of the Governor and Council, paragraph 8.

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ceedings with no good-will, represented, in strong terms, his enormous pecuniary advantages, and his thankless character; and, from his letters, it would appear that there could be no just reason for delaying the payment*. It was not required immediately; but the right of the English government was acknowledged; the time and conditions might be the subject of negotiation.

May.

To this requisition, the Vizier answered that much was yet to be accomplished before the claim could arise; and, when Colonel Champion was preparing to canton at Barelly during the rains, the Rohillas, still upward of forty thousand strong, had reassembled under the command of Fyzoola Khan. The Mahratta chiefs also had accommodated their differences; and, some acts which appeared hostile having been done by Shah Allum, the Vizier importuned the Commander-in-Chief again to take the field. The acts imputed to the King were, that he had invited to his court Mir Cossim, the deposed Sovereign of Bengal, taken into his service Sumroo, the murderer of the prisoners at Patna, and had written letters to the Abdallees and the Mahratta chiefs, to return toward Delhi, and to Fyzoola Khan, to encourage him in hostile proceedings. These efforts, if real, were unimportant. A prince in name, without wealth or power, could effect very little by his mandates or

He still requires the British troops.

* See same Report, Appendix 27, p. 920, in which the Colonel writes—"Since the defeat of the Rohillas, the Nabob has plundered the whole country, "insomuch, that in Peely, Beet, Birelly, Ouly, and Bissouly, he has found jewels "and money above and under ground, elephants, camels, horses, and other ef-"fects, to the value, I am confident, of above fifty lacks of rupees (£625,000), "besides what the individuals of his army have possessed themselves of." And in another part of the dispatch he says: "your troops, by their gallantry, have "redeemed this country, and, of course, gained to the Company half-a-million of "money; they have, moreover, been the enrichers of Sujah ul Dowlah to an im-"mense amount: before their faces he has seized these riches, and he has not "even thanked them for their services." It is most probable that the Colonel was deceived as to the amount of plunder; to the thankfulness of the Vizier he certainly did less than justice, as the letter written by Sujah ul Dowlah to the Council at Bengal will shew. "Praise be to the Creator of the world, that, by "his favour, I have obtained the wishes of my heart. May this victory prove "happy to my friend; for, in reality, the alliance betwixt us renders our mutual "victories equally interesting to both. In the engagement, Colonel Champion "and the English troops behaved with great spirit and activity; and it is owing "to the favour of God, to a fortunate opportunity, and to the zealous efforts of "the English troops, that this victory has been acquired."

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solicitations. Sujah ul Dowlah complained of his conduct; but he vindicated himself with strong protestations of regard for the Vizier, and asserted that the employment of Sumroo was in conformity to the wishes of the Vizier himself*.

With regard to the required continuance of aid, Colonel Champion was of opinion that the Vizier, being in possession of all Hafez Rhamet's country, and of Ali and Bissolie, belonging to Dundy Khan, it might be inexpedient to attempt further conquests. He urged, also, the health and well-being of the troops; the false and unsafe character of the Vizier, who, he said, would leave the British force to sustain the whole weight of the war, feeding the commander with solemn promises productive only of disappointment. The native powers dreaded his ascendancy; and their disgust at his treatment of Hafez Rhamet's family, and the inhabitants of his country, would lessen the reputation of our justice†.

Conduct of the Vizier toward the family of Hafez.

In fact, the Vizier had used his right of conquest with barbarous rigour. Rhamet's country was ravaged; his widow and family plundered, insulted, dishonoured, and finally sent to Fyzabad, that compassion for their woes might not produce ill feelings among those who beheld them. Mr. Middleton, agent for the Council at Benares, somewhat palliated, but could not effectually deny any part of the charge. Indeed, with every allowance for oriental exaggeration, it is not easy to believe that a widow had no foundation for complaint, when, invoking compassion, she said, "the miserable "Hafez for forty years governed this country, and the "very beasts of the forests trembled at his bravery. He "is slain; and to his children not an atom remains; "but they are cast from their habitations naked, ex- "posed to the winds, the heats, and the burning sand, "and perishing for want of even rice and water. Yes- "terday I was mistress of a hundred thousand people; "to-day I am in want even of a cup of water." Her

* Fifth Report, ut supra, pp. 914, 930.
† Same, p 916.

sons also complained, in terms less vehement, but not less affecting. "We remained in this country," they said, "in consequence of letters from the Nabob "Vizier; otherwise, we should have fled, as other "chiefs did, and preserved our characters and honour: "these he has taken away, with our effects; and how "he has dishonoured us is known to all*."

Probably the effect of these representations was diminished by the tone and style adopted by Colonel Champion; who, from dislike of the Vizier, always put the most unfavourable constructions on his motives, words, and conduct. The letter and petition were supposed to have been framed on instructions from him; and the council animadverted, with considerable warmth, on the suggestion that the reputation of Britain could in any way depend on Sujah ul Dowlah.

Campaign renewed.

It was finally resolved that the request of the Vizier should be complied with, and the Commander-in-Chief again marched against the Rohillas, with instructions to persevere, even although the Mogul should take the field on their side. They were assembled, under the command of Fyzoola Khan, at Patter Gur, the most northern division of their country. Colonel Champion commenced judiciously†; he moved to Bissolie, and then twenty-four coss (about 36 miles) beyond it, advancing leisurely, so that his troops might restore their health and spirits by repose. On arriving within four short marches of Patter Gur, he was informed that the Rohillas had retired; and, in a few days, the Vizier took possession of the city without resistance; thus completing his conquest of the Rohilla country, beyond which the Bengal government was not bound to assist him.

July.

5th August

8th.

10th.

Capture of Patter Gur.

16th.

Arrangement with Nudjif Khan.

Some slight interruption to the career of success arose from the appearance of Nujif Khan at the head of a considerable force. By virtue of a supposed treaty between the Vizier and the Mogul, he claimed a moiety of the conquests made on the Rohillas; Sujah

* Fifth Report ut supra, Appendix 27, pp. 917, 919, 927, 928, 930.
† Fifth Report, ut supra, pp. 932, 933.

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ul Dowlah and the British commanding officer had an interview with Shah Allum on the subject, and Nudjif, having had some success against the Jauts, by means of which he gained power and revenue for himself, the British government finally consented to restore his annual stipend of two lacks (£25,000), which had been reserved for him in 1765, although, on his first appearance in supposed hostility, it had been discontinued*.

Proposals of Fyzoolah Khan.

May.

During the whole war, Colonel Champion had observed the conduct of the Vizier with disgust and indignation. Soon after the battle against Hafez, he had been informed that Fyzoolah Khan was retreating toward the mountains with all his treasure, amounting, in ready money, to seventy-five lacks of rupees (£937,500); and Fyzoolah wrote a letter, offering to throw himself on the Colonel's protection, while, by a messenger, he proposed to pay the Nabob twenty lacks (£250,000) on being reinstated in his country, which yielded annually from six to eight lacks. The Vizier, when this proposal was communicated, answered that he would not give back a span of country for a crore of rupees (£1,250,000). The Colonel might protect the person of Fyzoolah; but the treasure he claimed as his own property, independent of the English. He declined the offer of a British force to assist in pursuing Fyzoolah, sent, or pretended to have sent, cavalry of his own for that purpose; but, in fact, the Rohilla escaped. Colonel Champion represented these matters with great warmth to the government; intimating, too, that had they foreseen such events, they would have made better terms for their employers. The Council did not enter into his views; but explicitly disclaimed any right in the army to share the treasures which might be taken from Fyzoolah Khan; and, with sharp expressions of disapprobation of the phrase which imputed want of foresight, ridiculed the belief that this Nabob, with such a territory as was described, and that too, for the last two years, the seat of war, or very

Complaints of Colonel Champion.

3rd June.

* Fifth Reports, ut supra, p. 728; and see Appendix 27, 28, and 45.

close to it, should be in possession of such a mass of treasure*.

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As the forces advanced, and the final success of the expedition became certain, the Vizier, hoping perhaps to conciliate the British commander, spontaneously offered a donation of seven lacks (£87,500) to be distributed among his troops. The Colonel joyfully welcomed this promise, and signified it to the field officers; but the Council peremptorily rejected it, as contrary to the instructions of the Company and to the late act of Parliament†.

8th August. Present proposed to the army.

29th August.

When, upon the evacuation of Patter Gur, the Rohilla army, still amounting to forty thousand men, was cooped up in the mountains, and in want of provisions, the Vizier was anxious that Colonel Champion should join in attacking them; but, as they were at Loll Dong, a place beyond the Rohilla territory, the English commander refused to march, thinking he should exceed his instructions. Some ineffectual attempts at negotiation ensued; and the Rohillas, reduced to the greatest distress, removed still further from their own confines, before powers arrived from government enabling the Commander-in-chief to pass the limits originally prescribed. The post occupied by Fyzoolah Khan being too strong for a hasty attack, negotiations were opened, closed, and renewed, until, at last, his danger becoming more and more imminent, the Rohilla chief consented to surrender his territory and one half of his effects to his opponent, on receiving a pension of fourteen lacks and three quarters of rupees (£184,375) in the Rohilcund country‡.

August.

Peace with the Rohillas.

September.

7th October.

Repeated applications were made to the Vizier, in the course of the campaign, for the forty lacks of rupees; but they still remained unpaid, although full confidence was expressed in his integrity and good intentions§.

During these transactions, the government of Bom-

Transactions in Bombay.

* Fifth Report, Appendix 27, ut supra, p. 922.
† Same, pp. 915, 921, 937.
‡ Fifth Report, ut supra, pp. 915, 1045, 1055, et seqq.
§ Fifth Report, ut supra, p. 915.

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bay was involved in hostilities and negotiations whe the Nabob of Broach. The object aimed at was the acquisition of Bassein and Salsette, from the Mahrattas, which had been recommended by the Directors, at a time when they professed to disclaim all extension of territory*. Attempts were made to acquire these dominions by negotiation, and hopes entertained that they might fall into the hands of the Bombay government, in consequence of some events in the war between the Mahrattas and Hyder Ally. Disappointed in both these expectations, the Government brought forward an unexpected and enormous demand, claiming from the Nabob of Broach forty years' arrear of the phoorza, or pension granted by the Mogul to the Nabob of Surat, about one hundred and fifty years before that time. This donation was estimated at seventy thousand rupees (£8,750) a year; and to it were added sums which had been collected during the last six years, as customs, from merchants trading under the Company's protection, estimated at twenty-five thousand rupees (£3,125) for each year; and, lastly, about two or three lacks (£25,000 to £37,500) for the expenses of their recent armament, making the intire amount about four hundred thousand pounds sterling. It was not expected that this whole sum would be paid; but it was hoped that five or six lacks (£62,500 to 75,000) would be obtained. To enforce these demands, the Presidency sent a body of troops towards Broach; but the expedition produced no effect, and the Nabob himself went to the Presidency to settle the dispute. The arrangement was not easily completed; the Council added to their former demands the expense of the late expedition: the discussions were protracted; and it was not until the Nabob was about to quit the Presidency that he was induced to sign a treaty by which all fees and customs on trade at Broach, carried on by British subjects, or others trading under them, were to be imposed and levied by the Company; they were to

1771. April. Demand on the Nabob of Broach.

30th Nov. Final arrangements.

* General Letter to Bombay, 18th March, 1768; also Gleig's Memoirs of Warren Hastings, vol. i. p. 346.

have a factory to the exclusion of all European traders, except the Dutch; military arrangements were formed, and the Nabob agreed to pay, at stated periods, four lacks (£50,000). 1771.

All these transactions were strongly disapproved by the Court of Directors. They censured the armament as unwarrantably expensive, especially at a time when the Council stated that they were under the greatest difficulties in raising indispensable supplies. 1772. April. Censured by the Company.

The Council at Bombay soon found reason to believe that the Nabob was eluding and violating every stipulation in his treaty; but, with the letter of the Company before them, it was not easy to resolve on hostilities. When the question of an expedition against Broach was first discussed, the board was equally divided; at subsequent meetings, several members gave their opinions in writing; General Wedderburne, Mr. Fletcher, and Mr. Taylor, approving, while a strong letter of dissent was signed by Messrs. Draper, Watson, Stackhouse, Shawe, and Garden; but, notwithstanding the sentiments thus recorded, the affirmative was carried on a division. A military force, headed by General Wedderburne, marched against Broach; it was taken, with a loss which would have been deemed inconsiderable, had it not included the General, who was killed while reconnoitring too near the town. The only result of this expedition was a treaty, by which it was agreed that every thing should remain on the footing it was before the conquest, the English and the Nabob each receiving their share of the revenues in the proportion they then stood. Although the Council justly considered this agreement to be very loose, inconclusive, liable to objection, and likely to produce disputes in collecting the revenue, still, for the present, they felt that they must acquiesce. October. Capture of Broach. 13th October. 21st—30th. 30th October. 14th Nov. Treaty. 1773. 12th January. 2nd February.

At a subsequent period, the disapprobation of the Company was pointedly and severely expressed. "There "is no part of your conduct more reprehensible than "that of engaging, without absolute necessity, in mili- "tary expeditions. The large sums which have been "expended at Broach, and on the Cooleys, are an im- 1775. 12th April. Disapprobation of the Company.

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"mediate inconvenience to the Company, and the consequences of your proceedings embarrassing in the highest degree; and, after succeeding against the place, it is mortifying to observe that our affairs are in a much worse situation than they were before those expeditions were undertaken; as we do not find that the charges in conquering the country, and the expenses in keeping the conquest, are likely to be defrayed from its resources in a reasonable time, without oppressing the inhabitants."

CHAPTER THE FIFTY-FIRST.

1772—1775.

India.—Commencement of the new government.—Observations on its structure.—Systematic opposition to Mr. Hastings—first proceedings.—Mr. Middleton recalled from Benares.—Sentiments of the Company.—Death of Sujah ul Dowlah.—Exactions from his successor.—State of Bombay.—The Mahrattas.—The Peishwa.—Ragonaut Row, also called Ragobah, made Peishwa—opposition to him—he applies to the government of Bombay.—Salsette taken.—Treaty with Ragobah.—Endeavours to make peace.—Treaty concluded.—Other discussions in the Supreme Council.—Administration of justice.—The ancient system of the natives.—New court of supreme judicature.—Objections to a new system.—Increasing discord in the Supreme Council.—Nundcomar—his accusation of Mr. Hastings—debate at the Board.—Resolution of the Governor-general.—Examination of Nundcomar.—Vote of the majority.—Representations to the Directors.—Nundcomar and others tried for conspiracies.—Nundcomar accused of forgery—committed—objections raised by him—his complaints examined—interference of the three members of the Supreme Council.—Trial of Nundcomar—defence—he is found guilty—and executed.—Observations.

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1772. Commencement of the new government.

Such was the position of affairs when the new government began to act. The statute, which had recently passed, effected material alterations in the government of the Company, both at home and in India. The qualification of voters in the Court of Proprietors and the duration of the authority of Directors were changed, and the Directors were obliged,

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within fourteen days after the arrival of dispatches relative to civil or military affairs, to communicate their contents to the Secretary of State. In India, instead of a president and council at each presidency, independent of each other, and consequently in a state of possible rivalship, a governor-general with four counsellors was appointed at Bengal, without whose sanction the governments of Madras and Bombay could not form alliances, wage war, or make treaties of peace with the native powers. In the Council thus formed, the Governor-general had only a casting vote, in case of an equal division, but no separate or independent authority or power*.

1774. 21st October.

This change was to take place immediately after public proclamation of the presence of the Governor-general and Counsellors, or any three of them, at Calcutta: Mr. Hastings and Mr. Barwell were there when the other three members, General Clavering, Colonel Monson, and Mr. Francis, arrived; consequently no time was lost in their assuming office: the proclamation was made the following day, and their number was full from the beginning.

Observations on its structure.

However well intended and profoundly considered the new regulations may have been, they were subject to many objections†. Moderation, a conciliatory spirit, and a resolute co-operation of the Council with the Governor-general, seemed indispensably necessary to the public welfare; and, in their instructions, the Company earnestly recommended to the parties perfect harmony among themselves, as an object of the highest concern to the public prosperity, and the due execution of the great trust reposed in them‡. But the effect of this recommendation was much diminished by a direction, that all dissents should be entered on the proceedings, and regularly transmitted by every ship§. Even if the spirit and temper of the times had led to unanimity in deliberative bodies, such an op-

* Stat. 13 Geo. III. c. 65. Gleig's Life of Hastings, vol. i. p. 443.
† See Ninth Report from the Select Committee, 1783; Rep. vol. vi p. 50.
‡ Fifth Report of the Committee of Secrecy, 1782, par. 1, vol. vii. p. 806.
§ Ib. par. 37.

portunity for each individual to signalize himself, and present his own opinions in their utmost strength, might have produced disunion; but, in the circumstances of the new administration, and with the examples which were presented to them in England and America, it was not to be expected that tranquillity would long prevail. The new government was instructed to cause strict examination into all oppressions and abuses; and such an instruction, had other causes been absent, could not fail to inspire a spirit of inquisition and cavil. Accordingly, it was stated in a dispatch, written in a month after the installation of the new Council, that their consultations had not been frequent, nor had their resolutions been formed in that harmony which the Company had enjoined*.

21st Nov.

Systematic opposition.

It seemed that the new members formed themselves, at once, into a systematic opposition against the Governor-general, who, being supported only by Mr. Barwell, was always outvoted. At an early meeting of the Council, he delivered a minute, containing a view of the revenues and politics of the country; and this opportunity was eagerly embraced by the three new members to display their hostility and their power. They demanded the original correspondence between the Governor-general, Mr. Middleton, and Colonel Champion; and, when Mr. Hastings proposed to give all such extracts as regarded public affairs, reserving only those matters which, occurring in the course of a free and personal communication, might not be proper for a public record, it was carried that the whole correspondence should be required. The Governor-general dissented: the minute containing his reasons was recorded, and against it a strenuous protest was entered.

25th Oct. First proceedings.

26th. Mr. Middleton recalled.

Before this question had been determined, a resolution passed for the recall of Mr. Middleton, the production of all his correspondence, and the substitution of Colonel Champion as resident, with power to treat with the Vizier. Mr. Hastings in vain opposed

* Fifth Report of the Committee of Secrecy; Rep. vol. vii. pp. 737, 974.

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the resolutions; in vain he protested against the removal of Mr. Middleton, as proclaiming "to all the "powers of Hindostan, in almost the first public act of "the new administration, the total abolition of the "authority hitherto exercised by him." The affront put on the Governor-general by these proceedings could not be denied or palliated; the political consequences might have been greater, had not Sujah ul Dowlah prevented the effect of Colonel Champion's hostile intervention by a hasty peace.

31st Oct. and 3rd. Nov.

Other resolutions were passed for pressing the payment of the forty lacks of rupees, and withdrawing the Company's troops from the Vizier's service; but, although these propositions occasioned debates and protests, the peace and the declarations of the Nabob rendered them of small importance. The investigation of measures taken before the new administration commenced was pursued with great vigour, and not only written documents, but living witnesses were examined. The proceedings and protests grew daily more and more hostile, respect was no longer affected, but, in its stead, the minutes abounded in terms of sarcasm and rudeness*.

Sentiments of the Company.

Accounts of all these debates were regularly forwarded to the East India Company, who seem to have viewed with great dissatisfaction the progress of disputes, which tended obviously to the ruin of the establishment. The voluminous statements transmitted by the conflicting parties demonstrated a desire on the part of the new members, formed perhaps before their arrival in India, to thwart and harass Mr. Hastings; and this was particularly shewn in their eagerness to investigate, and evident inclination to censure, every act which he had directed. In so doing, they often reasoned upon events which had taken place, unmindful of the situation of those who had to devise measures while the future was unknown, and to act upon such probabilities as their judgment could suggest. In some cases, strong appeals were made to passion

* See Fifth Report, ut sup. p. 982, et seqq.

and feeling, where necessity and the political state of the country were alone to be regarded; and, in others, the writers betrayed an incorrect notion of the history and relative state of the native powers*.

3rd March. Decision of the Directors.

Called upon to deliver their opinions, the Company expressed intire concurrence in the suppression of the Great Mogul's tribute. The war against the Rohillas was judged with negative applause and qualified censure. They blamed the march of a brigade into the centre of the Rohilla country; but still approved, as they had before, in general, of the treaty with Sujah ul Dowlah. At a subsequent period, the Court of Directors voted that the agreement with the Nabob Vizier for the hire of a part of the Company's forces for the reduction of the Rohilla country, and the subsequent steps taken for carrying on the war, were founded on wrong policy, and contrary to the general orders of the Company, frequently repeated; and they also declared, that the whole correspondence between the Governor-general and Mr. Middleton ought to have been laid before the members of the superior council. The general court of proprietors, after much discussion, passed these resolutions, but with an introductory paragraph, declaring their high opinion of the services and integrity of Mr. Hastings, and that they could not, without proof, suspect him of corrupt motives†.

7th March.

1st. Dec.

6th Dec.

Death of Sujah ul Dowlah.

Soon after the termination of the Rohilla war, Sujah ul Dowlah expired. His health had for some time been declining, and his mind was not a little agitated by the change which had taken place in the conduct of the English government toward him; particularly by the peremptory manner in which he was pressed for payment of the forty lacks of rupees‡. This potentate had reason to be warmly attached to the British rulers. When dispossessed of his dominions, they had restored him; much of his subsequent prosperity was due to them: and, as far as a fickle temper and wavering policy would permit, he was devoted to

* See the Fifth Report, ut supra, particularly Appendix No. 45.
† Fifth Report, ut supra, and Appendix 40, vol. viii. pp. 1 to 10.
‡ Reports, vol. vii. p. 988 to 1004.

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their interests. As an ally, he was important in the scale of native powers. His dominions were extensive, populous, and well cultivated; his mode of living magnificent; his great attention to the Hindoos had rendered him popular*, and the support afforded him by the British government augmented the confidence of the people†. By his will he nominated Mirza Amanny to be his successor, who, on assuming the rule, took the name of Assuf ul Dowlah. The dying Nabob made this appointment out of affection for one of his wives, the mother of Mirza; and, as a mark of his confidence in Mr. Hastings, intrusted the widow to his guardianship‡.

Feb. 15. Exactions from his successor.

On the decease of the Nabob Vizier, the majority in the Bengal government voted that the treaties with him terminated on that event. New compacts were directed to be made with Assuf, securing to the Company an increased subsidy for the brigade in his service, and the sovereignty and possession in perpetuity

21st May. 6th June.

of certain districts, which had been under the dominion of Cheyt Sing, Rajah of Benares. The tribute reserved on these provinces to the Nabob, calculated at twenty-two lacks ten thousand rupees (£276,250) was transferred to the Company, and Assuf agreed to pay all balances due from his father§. Such were the conditions exacted for fixing on the throne a prince whom there could have been no just pretence for deposing, but who does not appear to have possessed any quality of disposition or understanding to justify his elevation. Mr. Hastings and Mr. Barwell vainly opposed these proceedings, declaring the new treaty to be neither honourable nor practicable‖. The Court of Directors, although

* First Report of the Select Committee; Rep. vol. v. p. 40.

† Tenth Report of the Select Committee, Appendix 16; Reports, vol vi. p. 558.

‡ Same Report, p. 487, and Appendix.

§ Second Report of the Select Committee; Reports, vol. v. p. 456; and Fifth Report of the Committee of Secrecy; Reports, vol. vii. p. 783.

‖ Fifth Report, ubi supra. And see Second Report of the Select Committee; Reports, vol. v. p. 461; where the sentiments of the majority and of Mr. Hastings are thus authentically recorded in minutes entered and transmitted by themselves. "The permanent advantages," say the three members of the Council, "secured to "the Company by our treaty with the present Subahdar of Oude, are equally con- "spicuous and important; they have extorted an acknowledgment from the Go- "vernor-general, with which he has not been accustomed to honour any measures "but his own. In return for an acquisition of twenty-two lacks a year for ever, with

they did not refuse the benefit thus acquired, distinctly renounced the strange and perhaps unprecedented doctrine on which it was founded*.

Dec. 15. Whatever hopes the Council might entertain of profit from this transaction, the moral effect was extremely pernicious. The natives were surprised and displeased at seeing Cheyt Sing, hitherto a rajah or prince (for the authority of the Nabob of Oude over him was merely nominal†) reduced to the state of a zemindar, or tributary lord, and his sovereignty wrested from him, without a pretence of aggression or misconduct. Nor were the first measures of the Council calculated to soothe his feelings or acquire his confidence. By an eager and strict inquiry it was discovered that the annual tribute which might have been required from him by the Nabob, exceeded that which had been calculated by about fifty thousand rupees (£6,250), and the increased sum was rigorously exacted‡.

State of Bombay. During this period, the presidency of Bombay exhibited a scene of contention, arising from transactions with the Mahrattas, and the efforts which were made to acquire the island of Salsette.

The Mahrattas. The Mahrattas, one of the most ancient people of India, justly proud of having never submitted to the Mahomedan yoke, had maintained their independence by valour, perseverance, and contempt of privations. Driven from the plains by the arms of the conqueror, they had found safety in the recesses of the mountains, and forming there, under one chief Rajah, of the Raypout, or warrior, caste, a

"an increase of fifty thousand rupees to the monthly subsidy of the brigade, be-
"sides many other advantages and honourable stipulations, hardly anything is
"granted on our part, but a personal guarantee of the same countries to the son
"which we were before bound to guarantee to the father. The measure is strictly
"and exclusively ours. The original plan was opposed in every step by the
"Governor-general and Mr. Barwell."—"The new treaty with Assuf ul Dowlah,"
Mr. Hastings observes, "is certainly advantageous to the Company, if the condi-
"tions of it can be fulfilled; but of this I ever did, and do still, entertain a doubt,
"notwithstanding the acknowledgments which it is said to have extorted from
"me, but which I do not remember to have expressed, and now disclaim; for I
"cannot deem it honourable to have extorted from the Nabob concessions incon-
"sistent with our former treaties, to which the necessity of his situation alone
"obliged him, however unwillingly, to submit."

* Fifth Report of Committee of Secrecy, Appendix 46; Rep. vol. vi. p. 9.—vol. vii. p. 783.

† Id. p. 461. ‡ Id. p. 461.

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powerful military body, consisting almost intirely of cavalry, had, during the reign of Aurengzebe and the succeeding mogul, not only repelled those who sought to subjugate them, but levied contributions and permanent tribute on the plains adjacent to their barren asylum. This assumed right extended over the Mysore and the Carnatic, and even to the province of Bengal before it was ceded to the English: it was not afterward enforced, nor had it been expressly renounced. From these circumstances, they have, erroneously, been deemed a mere combination of well-organized freebooters*. The territory under the dominion of the chief and his feudatories extended from the northern boundary of the Guzerat to the coast of Orissa.

The Peishwa.

As their sovereign chief was necessarily military, the principal direction of civil affairs was confided to a council consisting of eight bramins; their caste was superior to that of the rajah, and their influence, from religious causes, very considerable: they nominated one of their number to be Peishwa†, and he was invested with the highest rank and power. Such an appointment led to its natural and almost inevitable consequences; the Peishwa, having persuaded a feeble rajah to resign the entire conduct of affairs into his hands, assumed the new title of Row Pundit, or Chief of the Pundits, the usurped authority became hereditary, and Bajerow, the son and successor of Kishwanath Ballajee, the first Row Pundit, confined the rajah in his residence at Sattarah, while he exercised undisputed supremacy in another capital called Poonah. During his reign, as it may properly be termed, the Mahratta troops obtained, by conquest from the Portuguese, the island of Salsette and the port of Bassein, with their dependencies. This acquisition, so important in its moral effect, being the first instance of dominion wrested from the Europeans by a native power, occasioned some uneasiness to the British Government; as it afforded means, and the Mahrattas

* See Annual Register, 1782, vol. xxv.

† Literally, "he who precedes the rest."

did not disguise the intention, of forming a marine. Bajerow, dying unexpectedly, left a son, Madbarrow, aged only fourteen, who was recognized as his successor, under the regency of his uncle Ragonaut Row, called also Ragobah; but divisions, artfully excited between these two kinsmen, led to the imprisonment of the uncle. During the ascendency of Ragobah, some treaties, which do not appear to have been important, were concluded between him and the Madras government. Madbarrow lived only to the age of twenty-five; but, as he advanced in years, had shewn such a spirit as alarmed Hyder Ally for the permanence of his power, and compelled him to apply at Madras for succours, according to treaties. This application was refused on several grounds of local policy, and in compliance with the command of the Court of Directors to preserve a strict neutrality; and the refusal sunk deep into the mind of Hyder.

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Before his death, Madbarrow recommended Narrain Row, his brother and successor, to the guardianship and direction of Ragobah, who was, in consequence, set at liberty, or at least allowed his freedom on parole within the City of Poonah. Intrigues and jealousies still prevailed, and he was again placed in confinement, when, on the unexplained assassination of Narrain Row, he was acknowledged and duly invested with the dignity of Peishwa. He endeavoured, but unsuccessfully, to make himself independent by means of an army, and formidable by warlike achievements; but, being disappointed of a tribute from the Nizam, and supplies from Mahommed Ally, Nabob of the Carnatic, he accepted from Hyder Ally twenty-five lacks of rupees (£312,500), as a compromise for the intire dominion of three provinces, Mudgevarry, Hunscootah, and Chunderdroog. While he was absent from Poonah on these affairs, the chief Bramins formed a confederacy and levied an army, which was joined by the forces of the Nizam; but, although Ragobah defeated the troops thus collected, he had to experience fresh difficulties. Gungaboy, the widow of Narrain Row, was said to be delivered of a son, who

1773. Ragonaut Row made Peishwa.

1774. Oppposition to him.

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was immediately proclaimed by the Bramins the true heir to the peishwahship, although doubts were expressed, both of the widow's pregnancy and the identity of the offspring. Two powerful Mahratta chiefs, Tookajee Holkar and Madajee Scindia, at first proposed to support Ragobah; but he having, through timidity and distrust, retired into the Guzerat country, and thrown himself into the arms of Govind Row Gwicawar, his former friends deserted him, and formed with some Mahratta chiefs and the Bramins a combination calling themselves the Barreh Bhi, or twelve friends, to support the title of the infant Peishwa.

August 1774. He applies to the Government of Bombay.

Ragobah made ineffectual application for assistance to the President and Council of Bombay; the native powers, Gosparach, Holkar, and Scindia, the Nizam, and Hyder Ally, whichever side they appeared to espouse, were, in fact, advancing their own separate interests; and the French pursuing the same course, veiling and promoting their attempts with great art and address.

Salsette taken.

In this state of things, the Bombay government again directed its views to the attainment of Salsette and Bassein. Although disappointed in the result of their former negotiation, the Company, in subsequent dispatches, repeated their wishes, but always added injunctions against force. At length, the Select Committee at Bombay, being apprized that the Portuguese intended to attempt the recovery of Salsette and Bassein, instructed Mr. Gambier, their agent at Surat, and their resident at Poonah, to make alluring offers to Ragobah and the Bramin ministers. In this undertaking, the committee acted entirely on their own authority, not knowing, or pretending not to know, that the new government was already installed at Bengal, and intitled to controul their proceedings. Salsette having been taken, without much effort, by Brigadier-General Gordon, they sent a corps of sepoys to the assistance of Ragobah; the Mahratta cruizers were defeated by the Bombay squadron, their largest ship destroyed, and their spirit of naval enterprize completely broken.

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1774. November.

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Ragobah consented, by treaty, to cede a considerable territorial revenue, including Salsette and Bassein, and to support two thousand five hundred troops, who marched to his assistance under Lieutenant-Colonel Keating; but, when they reached Surat, Ragobah, being suddenly attacked and utterly defeated, had fled, with only one thousand men, to Cambay. Refused admittance there, he retreated to Bowangar, and, at last, arrived at Surat, with only a single galliot. At this place, he ratified the treaty; and the government, still considering his affairs far from desperate, persevered in assisting him with the stipulated force.

March. Treaty with Ragobah.

War was carried on with that variety of success which might be expected where feeble individuals, versatile politics, and selfish views prevented the pursuit of any regular system. At one time, the affairs of Ragobah appeared prosperous, and it was believed that some of the ministers were likely to desert the grand confederacy; at another, the fruits of victory were wrested from the arms of his allies by accident, or, if not treachery, by one of those unaccountable panics which sometimes occur in military history, and must be recorded as mere events, without any solution of their causes. Although the Bombay presidency omitted or evaded the duty of communicating full and sincere intelligence, their applications for military and pecuniary aid were not disregarded; but negotiation was evidently desirable; and, for that purpose, Colonel Upton was directed to meet Mahommed Ali, Nabob of Arcot, through whom the confederates were willing to receive communications. The Bombay government were anxious to prosecute the war, both on account of the just rights of Ragobah and the advantages of a revenue, amounting to £250,000 a-year, together with the posts of Salsette and Bassein, which would be secured by establishing him. The confederates, on the other hand, refused to confirm our dominion over the desired posts, and required that the honour of the English name should be tarnished by giving up Ragobah into their power. It was also suggested that, if this Prince, driven to extremity, should throw him-

Mahratta war.

April.

May.

Endeavours to make peace.

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February. Awed by this declaration, the ministers assumed a more moderate tone, and it was definitively settled that Salsette, with the small dependent isles, called Carranja, Elephanta, Henery, and Hog, should remain with the English, to whom the ministers also surrendered all their right to a share of the city, and Pergunnah of Broach; assigned lands of the yearly value of three lacks (£37,500), and agreed to pay twelve lacks (£150,000) toward the military expenses. The English agreed to withdraw their troops, and re-

nounced all claim to the Guzerat country, ceded by Ragobah, and that which had been yielded up by Seagnor or Futty Sing. Ragobah was to disband his army; a general amnesty, with only four exceptions, was afforded to his adherents. Cooper Gang was his appointed residence: his household was established at one thousand horse, and some foot; and they, with a retinue of two hundred domestics, were to be paid by government: his income was to be an annuity of three lacks (£37,500), payable monthly; and any jewels which he might have deposited in the hands of the English were to be restored*.

Other discussions in the Supreme Council.

Beside the discussions and divisions which these transactions occasioned in the Supreme Council, the arrangements relating to finance and the law were sources of incessant inquiry, experiment, and regulation. Of the measures of finance, it were a labour without use or interest to attempt a detail; on the subject of municipal regulations some explanation is necessary.

Administration of justice.

To the state of the administration of justice in India, the attention of Parliament had been powerfully invited by the Committee of Secrecy, in 1773†. It appears that, by their ancient constitution, the people of Bengal had, in every district, a criminal court, called a Phousdary, in which the Zemindar or Rajah was the judge. He could not inflict capital punishment without orders from the government at Moorshedabad; but the general sentence on the rich was a fine, and, as the proceedings were summary, and the mulct a perquisite to the Zemindar, the mode in which justice was administered may easily be imagined. The court of civil jurisdiction in each district was called the Adawlut. It was also under the presidency of the Zemindar, and had cognizance of all causes between party and party: the perquisite of the judge was one-fourth or fifth part of the property recovered; a great dis-

* This narrative is derived intirely from the fifth Report of the Committee of Secrecy, and the Appendix; Reports, vol. vii. p. 713, to the end; and vol. viii. p. 1 to 270.

† Seventh Report; Rep. vol. iv. p. 323.

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couragement to suitors who had real claims, although it might afford hopes to those whose rights were not so apparent. These judicatures were not guided by any regular system of laws: the Koran was their code, and its commentators their authorities. Appeals were granted to the tribunals in the capital, where a court, called the Roy Adawlut, was held weekly, under the Nizam, or chief magistrate. In matters relating to land, the Dewan was the proper judge. Claims of personal property, assaults, trespass, and slander, were tried before the Darogo Adawlut ul Aalea. Questions of inheritance were decided by the Cazee, with certain assistants; and, in difficult cases, a general council of the law officers pronounced a final decision.

From these establishments it was observed that the subjects of the Mogul empire, in the province of Bengal, derived little protection or security. Although the forms of judicature were established and preserved, the despotic principles of the government rendered them the instruments of power, rather than of justice; not only unavailing to protect the people, but often the means of grievous oppression. To remedy the evils of this administration, the English, as well as the French and Dutch, when they had formed establishments, usurped the right of arresting persons within their own limits, and making them amenable to their laws. It was said that, as power increased, a rigid regard to the limits of this assumed jurisdiction was no longer paid, and the influence exercised by the British Gomastahs was much complained of. By virtue of two charters, granted in 1740 and 1753, a Mayor's court, for trial of certain civil suits, with a right of appeal to the King in council, where the sum recovered amounted to one thousand pagodas, and one for the recovery of small debts, were established.

New Court of Supreme Judicature.

This mode of distributing justice was attended with inconvenience and productive of complaints; and therefore, by the new statute, a supreme court of judicature was formed, consisting of a chief and three other judges, appointed by the crown, with power to exercise jurisdiction over all his Majesty's subjects in Bengal

and the adjacent provinces, in all cases, civil, criminal, maritime, and ecclesiastical; and also over contracts with natives of other parts of India residing in those provinces, if it were so agreed; and the trials were by jury. The Company was also confirmed in the right of establishing and maintaining courts of civil, criminal, and ecclesiastical jurisdiction at Madras, Patnam, and Bombay.

In the abstract, it might easily be said that the humane and salutary principles of English jurisprudence are a blessing, and that the communication of them to a large population, residing at an immense distance, must be of infinite value; but the offer of such a gift to a race in whom habits, manners, and religion, had already made strong and almost irremoveable impressions, might be a blessing in prospect only, and in the present time a yoke and a curse. Against the favourable reception of the English system, not only many prejudices, but many sound and reasonable objections, existed among the natives. To say that their own administration was defective and corrupt, was not sufficient to recommend another to which they were intire strangers. The modes of proceeding in civil cases were adverse to their customs and injurious to their feelings; and the application of penalties of the highest description to offences which they had been used to consider as slight and trivial, appeared a tyrannical innovation. The equality which knows no distinction of persons, and is justly the boast of the English law, was horrible in the eyes of a people accustomed to regard individuals in certain superior stations with abject humiliation and superstitious deference. A gentleman, acquainted by long experience and close observation with the state of India and the manners of the people, had, before the passing of the recent statutes, published his opinions on this head, and, in his examination before the Select Committee, he repeated and confirmed them*. The Hindoo religion, he observed, is calculated to keep its followers in

Objections to a new system.

* Mr. Harry Verelst. See Reports 5, p. 37.

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a state of separation from strangers; for it admits of no converts, and consists of more than ninety sects or castes; many of these are subdivided; but they may be all properly termed hereditary religions, as they are preserved distinct from each other, and each is governed by its own peculiar laws; these laws are fundamentally taken from the Beda, but their customs and manners are also considered as laws, and held as sacred as the Beda itself. A very considerable part of these manners and usages consists of corporeal purities and impurities, according to their ideas, and which would not be thought so by us. Some of these impurities may be contracted through inflictions suffered involuntarily*. The loss of caste is deemed by those of the higher class a punishment more severe than death. The object of worship is alike to all; but there are four principal castes, and many sects or distinctions, each of which has its peculiar rules†. The imprisonment of a person of high caste in the common gaol was described as an unheard-of indignity, and the arrest for debt, as practised in England, had never been used. The mode of compelling a reluctant debtor to do justice, was, by putting a guard over him in his own house. If to arrest a man was so repugnant to the feelings of the people, the exercise of such a process on a woman was still more distressing. That sex, from the blended operations of religion and custom, was quite sequestered from the society and contact

* An instance given on this subject is characteristic and peculiar. A Hindoo, who had a spoonful of beef broth forced into his mouth, could never be restored to his caste; the witness, supported by all the influence of the English Government, used every means to restore him, without effect. On Lord Clive's arrival in India afterward, they applied to the Bramins and men of eminent rank, who were induced to assemble at different times at Kisnagur, at Burdwan, and at Calcutta, from 1760, when he lost his caste, to 1766; and, although their inclination made them wish it, they could not, after consulting all their records, find an example to justify their restoring him to his caste: he never was restored, and died of a broken heart.

† Evidence of Honwontrow, a Bramin, Rep. 5, p. 39; Evidence of Mr. Verelst, Rep. 5, p. 38. It is, however, to be observed, that the Pundits in India, when consulted by the judges of the Supreme Court, gave opinions not quite consistent with those of the witnesses here cited, with respect to this extreme strictness. Their opinions were questioned, and perhaps the evidence was produced for the purpose of contradiction; but it is fair to observe, that in England it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to refute a Bramin by other Bramins, while in India, if improper evidence had been given, every town would have supplied persons of credit capable of destroying its effect.

of all men, except husbands, near relations, and persons employed by them on business. Women of any rank did not walk in public, nor were they seen by the intimate friends of their husbands*. The opinions of the natives were irreconcilable to the punishment of death, in the manner and with the frequency which the law of England then implied. Their princes might take the life of a Bramin for a great breach of trust, or crime against the state, but not for smaller offences; and even where death was the penalty, the halter was not the mode of inflicting it. He who died by the sword obtained remission of his sins; but he who perished by the halter, or by suicide, retained his offences upon him, and could not have funeral rites†.

Among such people, with principles so established and prejudices so confirmed, a new system of jurisprudence could not be introduced without great opposition; and many were their appeals and complaints against the inconveniences and hardships of innovation, which to them had the appearance and effect of oppression. British subjects also discovered grounds of dissatisfaction in the mode in which many regulations, particularly those relating to finance, were enforced, and urged many other objections. Some, if founded on correct principles, yet disclosed proceedings in which craft and obstinacy were so blended, as to prove that the desire of obstructing government prevailed at least as much as that of vindicating right; while others appeared to be founded on the desire of continuing profitable iniquities unimpeded, and of thwarting and confounding the administration of a system already appearing precarious and unstable, through the discord which prevailed among the rulers‡.

Case of Nundcomar.

One case, however, deeply affecting the character and interests of the British Government, the subject of

* See the evidence of Mr. Baber, Mr. Vansittart, and Major Rennell, ubi supra. The latter gentleman gives some extraordinary and affecting instances of the rigour with which the principle of female seclusion was observed.

† See the evidence of Honwontrow, and it is worth perusing for the many curious particulars it contains.

‡ See the Reports of the Select Committee; Rep. vol. v. where many of these cases are considered and discussed at length.

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profound sensation in India, and of much discussion at home, was that of the Rajah Nundcomar.

1776. Increasing discord in the Supreme Council.

The discussions in the Council had, from its first sittings, been conducted in an unvaried tone of party hostility. In vain did the Directors express their disapprobation of this spirit; it daily acquired new strength and virulence, until the minutes of the proceedings were disgraced by scoffs and sarcasms, and even by contradictions irreconcilable to the character or feelings of gentlemen. The dispatches to the Directors were loaded with charges, recriminations, and explanations. Mr. Hastings complained that the conduct of the majority shewed a desire to compel him to abandon his station. His opponents disclaimed all personal considerations; declared that, far from coming prepared to offer opposition, they had been highly prepossessed in favour of the Governor-general, from his high character for judgment and ability, and from the honourable manner in which his present station had been conferred on him*. It could not escape observation, that if these gentlemen had ever felt the favourable prejudice they expressed, the illumination of their minds must have been very sudden; since, in their first sitting, they had shewn, not merely a spirit of distrust and cavil, but a decided resolution to censure and subvert all that had been done by Mr. Hastings before their arrival, and to resist or prevent all that in future he should attempt. The Governor-general must have sunk under their efforts, but for the control given him by the statute, and his general character, which secured him a respect and attachment sufficient to counterbalance the weight of his opponents. In this state of things, any charge affecting his integrity would be gladly received; and an accuser soon presented himself in Nundcomar.

Nundcomar.

This man, considerably advanced in years, a Bramin of the first rank, and reputed to be of great riches, had been prime minister to Mir Jaffier, but was displaced

* Reports, vol. vi. pp. 714, 717.

at his death, and his situation conferred on Mahomed Reza Khan*. While out of office, his intrigues and his litigious disposition had gained him a general bad character.

For the purpose of introducing his complaint to the board, Nundcomar waited on Mr. Francis, and, as that gentleman asserted, without any communication of its contents, delivered to him a letter addressed to the Governor and Council, demanding of him, as a duty belonging to his office as a counsellor of state, to lay it before the board. Although unacquainted with the contents of the paper, Mr. Francis did apprehend, in general, that it contained some charge against Mr. Hastings; and he received and produced it, conceiving, as he said, that he could not, consistently with his duty, refuse such a letter, at the instance of a person of the Rajah's rank.

11th March.

His accusation of Mr. Hastings.

It contained a brief recapitulation of the writer's services, and a profession of his undeviating integrity, alleging, as a proof, that, during the ten years he had been out of employ, his successor, although he had tried all means, could not produce one man who would lay a complaint against him. He stated that, when he arrived from Madras, Mr. Hastings had availed himself of his knowledge and services; but, when the new counsellors arrived, although he introduced many other natives to them, he refused the Rajah that favour; and he mentioned other instances of personal offence to himself.

Having thus detailed his own private wrongs, he proceeded to his accusation. At the commencement of his government, he said, Mr. Hastings had promised him the appointment of Aumeer (Inspector-general) over the whole country. Relying on this promise, he had investigated the accounts of Mahomed Reza Khan, and detected embezzlements to the amount of thirteen lacks of rupees (£162,590) in one single particular; and of three crore, five lacks, twenty-six thousand nine hundred and fifty-seven rupees (£3,815,870) in the

* See Chapter 12.

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whole. To prevent further investigation, he said, Mahomed offered two lacks (£2,500) to him, and ten (£125,000) to Mr. Hastings, as a present: the Governor-general rejected the proposal with apparent indignation; but, in a few days, the guards were removed, Mahomed set at liberty, all further inquiry suppressed, and the delinquent patronized and supported in the exercise of oppression.

He also stated that, in the accounts of Shitabroy, who had held the lucrative and confidential post of Roy-royan of the Nizam*, embezzlements were discovered to the amount of ninety lacks of rupees (£1,125,000). His offer of four lacks (£50,000) to Mr. Hastings was, like the former, ostensibly rejected; but the proceedings on the subject were in like manner abandoned.

Other charges of a less important description were made; and, in conclusion, the Rajah asserted that, in presents on account of transactions of a public nature, Mr. Hastings had received, from various persons, three lacks, fifty-four thousand one hundred and five rupees (£44,318).

13th. In a subsequent letter, Nundcomar affirmed that the welfare of the Company and increase of its revenue had been sacrificed by the governors to their private interests; charged Mr. Hastings with having made his own personal emolument the rule of his conduct, inattentive to the prosperity of the country and the interests of his employers; and intreated, for his honour's sake, that he might be permitted to appear before the board, and establish his charges by incontestible evidence.

Debate at the board. Colonel Monson having moved that the Rajah should be called before the board, the Governor-general entered a minute, declaring that he would never

Remonstrance of Mr. Hastings. suffer Nundcomar to appear there as his accuser. He would not sit as a criminal, nor did he acknowledge the members as his judges. He considered, although he could not strictly prove it, that the gentlemen of

* The officer who has the immediate charge of the crown lands.

the majority were his accusers, pursuing their object of disgracing him, by making personal attacks calculated to draw on him popular odium; and their instruments were Mr. Joseph Fowke, Nundcomar, the Ranny of the Burdwan, and some others whom he named. The charges delivered by the latter proved the combination; for the Persian papers delivered on her behalf, with supposed translations, shewed that the originals had been English and the translations Persian. He had applied for the originals of some papers supposed to have been sent by her, and was refused; a fact which justified him in declaring his belief that no such originals existed. He remarked on the insolence of Nundcomar, in demanding that Mr. Francis, a counsellor of the state, should be the bearer of a letter; an office more becoming one of the lowest of the people, a peon, or a hircarrah. He had been informed long ago of the intention of the Rajah, and furnished with a copy of a paper, which he laid before the board, and which he was told had been carried by Nundcomar to Colonel Monson, with whom he had been employed some hours in explaining the nature of the accusation. "I do not mean to infer," he added, "that it makes "any alteration in the nature of the charges, were they "delivered immediately from any ostensible accusers, "or came to the board through the channel of patron-"age; but it is sufficient to authorize the conviction "which I feel, that these gentlemen are parties in the "accusations of which they assert the right of being "the judges." He exposed the means which had been used to deprive him of his legal authority, and to proclaim the annihilation of it to the world; but of all instances the present was the most extraordinary. Was he, the chief of the administration, their superior, appointed by the legislature itself, to sit at the board to be arraigned in the presence of Nundcomar, a wretch whom they all knew to be one of the basest of mankind? "I will not," he exclaimed. "You "may, if you please, form yourselves into a committee "for the investigation of these matters; but I will not "meet Nundcomar, nor suffer him to be examined at

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"the board; you have no right to do it; nor can it "answer any other purpose than that of vilifying and "insulting me."

Colonel Monson having denied that he ever saw any paper containing a charge against the Governor-general, and his motion being persisted in, Mr. Hastings declared the Council dissolved, and protested against any of its acts, which, being done during his absence, would be illegal and unwarranted; and he and Mr. Barwell withdrew*.

Examination of Nundcomar.

Nundcomar, being called in, declared that every thing he had to disclose was contained in his letter. In answer to the demand of vouchers, he produced a letter written by the Munny Begum to himself, in the preceding July or August, requesting him to pay to the Governor one lack of rupees (£12,500), as she was raising another to meet his demands. He declared he had no more papers to produce; he had shewn this letter to Cantoo Baboo, the Governor's banyan, or secretary, to whom he offered a copy, which the other never called to require, and never offered him a bribe to make him part with the original. With respect to the other sums alluded to in his letter, as presents, he declared he had seen them paid in golden mohurs to the Governor's house steward, and that he himself acknowledged their having come safely to his hands.

Cantoo Baboo having been required to attend, by the direction of Mr. Hastings, declined doing so; and Nundcomar having withdrawn, the secretary waited on the Governor-general with the compliments of the board, desiring that he would now return and take the chair. He answered that he could not reply to a message delivered to him under a title which he did not acknowledge; but, presenting his compliments to General Clavering, Mr. Monson, and Mr. Francis, declined meeting them in council at that late hour of the night,

* The opinion of very eminent counsel was taken on the power of the Governor-general to dissolve the Council; or, by withdrawing from it, to terminate its powers. Three, Mr. Thurlow, Mr. Dunning, and Mr. Sayer, agreed that the Governor-general had the power, although the latter censured in strong terms the occasion and manner of exercising it. One, Mr. Wallace, was of opinion, that he had no such power. Reports, vol. vi. p. 731.

when he had it not in his power to call a full board, Mr. Barwell being in the country. He had ordered summonses for a council in the revenue department on the morrow, at which he hoped to have the honour of meeting them. The three members immediately passed resolutions, that the money specified in the Maha Rajah's letter had been received by the Governor-general, and belonged to the Company; and requiring him to pay them into their treasury. Mr. Hastings refused to receive or answer this as the act of the board; and the Company's attorney was directed to obtain a legal opinion as to the proper mode of proceeding for recovery of the money. The learned counsel in Calcutta declared that Mr. Hastings was bound to pay it over; but as to the means of compelling him, and on the question of penalties, recommended a reference to the Board of Directors for instructions*.

Vote of the majority.

The non-attendance of Cantoo Baboo afforded means of offering fresh insult to Mr. Hastings. He was a man of superior station, and farmer of the revenue to a considerable amount; yet General Clavering proposed that he should be set in the stocks for his contempt; a punishment most humiliating, and inflicted only on the lowest of the people. The discussions on this subject were very personal and angry, and the proposition was at last evaded, a motion of adjournment being made by Mr. Francis.

Treatment of Cantoo Baboo

20th March.

Both parties made strong representations to the Board of Directors. Mr. Hastings accused his three opponents of intending, by continual provocations, to make him vacate his seat; or, by annihilating his influence, to render him a cypher in it; and, by misrepresenting the measures of his former administration, to effect his removal by a superior and legal authority; and he entered into a detailed justification of himself against the charges of Nundcomar. General Clavering and his colleagues wrote their observations on this letter; and, in conclusion, remarked that, whatever

Representation to the Directors.

25th March.

* See Mr. Farrer's opinion, Eleventh Report of the Select Committee; Rep. 6, p. 713.

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might have been the Rajah's motives, his discoveries had thrown a clear light upon the Governor-general's conduct, and the means he had taken of making the very large fortune he was said to possess, of upwards of forty lacks of rupees (£500,000). To this malignant observation, Mr. Hastings replied that he was ready, whenever required, to state the amount of his fortune to the Court of Directors; it would afford a strong proof how greatly the information of the majority differed from the fact*.

16th May.

Nundcomar and others tried for conspiracies.

While, in pursuance of the advice of Mr. Farrer, the inquiry as to presents was suspended, Nundcomar became the object of legal prosecution. He was first tried with Joseph and Francis Fowke and Roy Rada Churn, for conspiring to charge Mr. Hastings with having caused a false accusation to be preferred by one Cummaul ul Dien Ally Cawn against Joseph Fowke, and thereby representing the Governor as guilty of bribery and corruption. There was another indictment for a similar conspiracy against Mr. Barwell. On the part of Roy Rada Churn, an exemption from prosecution was claimed, on the ground of his being an ambassador; but this assertion was too futile to be supported. On the trial, in the Supreme Court, all the defendants were acquitted on the first indictment, and Joseph Fowke and Nundcomar were found guilty on the second†.

April.

May. Nundcomar accused of forgery.

Shortly after these proceedings had terminated, a charge of forgery was brought forward against Nundcomar. The examination of witnesses in support of the accusation, before two judges, Le Maistre and Hyde, lasted from nine in the morning until ten at night; and, as the depositions were full, clear, and positive, and the charge a capital felony, he was ordered to be committed. After the proceedings had closed, and when the judges were departing, Mr. Jarret, the Company's solicitor, represented, on behalf of the cul-

Committed.

Objections raised by him.

* Eleventh Report of the Select Committe, particularly the Appendix I; Rep. vol. vi. p. 699, et seqq.

† See the trials at large, reprinted from the Calcutta Report; published, by Authority, by T. Cadell, 1776.

prit, that a person of his rank would be contaminated by imprisonment in the common gaol. The judges had no alternative; they could not confine him in a private house, but ordered the gaoler to afford him every possible indulgence.

His complaints.

From the beginning of this proceeding, no efforts were spared to stigmatize it with the character of persecution. It was represented that the Rajah was not only a man of the first rank, but a Bramin of a very high caste; and that he might be degraded from that eminence, or suffer an indelible stain, were he to eat where he could not perform his ablutions. It was further said that he had besought the judges, who had thus dishonored and contaminated him, at least to permit a tent to be pitched without the circuit of the prison, or suffer him to be led every day to the side of the Ganges, to perform the rites of his religion, ablution and prayer. This request being refused, he remained, it was affirmed, eighty-six hours without food or water. Representations were repeatedly made to the judges; but they contented themselves with taking the opinion of pundits, provided and instructed by the Roy-royan; who declared that, if the Rajah were to eat in the place where he was confined, he must perform various penances before he could be absolved: but it was said the old man did not think life worth preserving on these terms*.

When this pathetic representation came to be investigated and reduced to simple fact, it appeared that persons of as high rank as Nundcomar had been, and then were, confined in the common gaol; that he was under no hardship; but, on the contrary, had two rooms for his own use, the keeper having given up to him that in which he and his wife used to sleep. On his objection that he could not eat or drink in a place where Christians or Mussulmen had been, eminent and respectable pundits, one of them the chief of that order, decided, that if the prisoner's confinement were to last

* Minute of General Clavering, Mr. Monson, and Mr. Francis, dated 16th May, 1775; Reports, vol. vi. p. 719.

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forty-one days, under the circumstances described, he would be obliged to fast two days, and to dispose of a sum of money, not less than a thousand rupees (£125), in charity; and it was afterward found that this donation might be reduced to twelve rupees, or thirty shillings. These were the dreadful penances and forfeitures which were represented as rendering "the old "man undesirous of life." As to the eighty-six hours' abstinence, Sir Elijah Impey was informed of it by the Under-Sheriff, Mr. Jarret, and Rhadacund, the prisoner's son-in-law, with an intimation that they feared all interference would be too late. Struck with horror, he immediately sent his own surgeon, Mr. Marchison, to the gaol, by whose affidavit it appeared that he found the prisoner extended on the ground in a seemingly weak and helpless condition, that he declared he had received no sustenance for the last four days, and spoke in a low and feeble voice; but his pulse did not confirm his declarations, or accord with the appearances he exhibited, for it was not weak, but full and regular. If he had fasted so long as was alleged, it was an extraordinary case, and inconsistent with the symptoms which must have appeared. Affidavits by the keeper of the prison, the Under-Sheriff, and others, shewed that the appearances and complaints were altogether simulated and unfounded; but the judges yielded to his request of being conducted without the prison walls to take his food.

Interference of members of council.

On the former trials of Nundcomar, General Clavering, Colonel Monson, and Mr. Francis, had endeavoured by letters to influence the proceedings of the court; and the irregularity of their conduct had been deservedly censured by the judges*. On the present occasion, they made minutes in the council-book, of which they refused a communication to the parties whom they endeavoured to implicate, and which nevertheless were forwarded to the Court of Directors, as judgments formed on due investigation, while the explanation or contradiction would not be received until

* Trial of Roy Rada Churn and others, above referred to, p. 5.

a long period of time had elapsed*, and the conduct of the judges was no less anxiously scrutinized and severely censured by the majority of the Council, than that of the Governor-general himself. 1775.

A true bill was found against the prisoner, charging him with having, on the 15th January 1770, forged and uttered, knowing it to be forged, a bond of one Bollakey Doss for payment of forty-eight thousand and twenty-one rupees, (about £6000) and four amras† on each rupee as premium. On his being arraigned, his learned counsel, Mr. Farrer, tendered a plea to the jurisdiction of the court; but the Chief Justice pointed out an objection to it, both in matter of fact and law. He offered Mr. Farrer time to amend it, if he thought it possible; but, after considering the objection, the learned gentleman withdrew the plea. He also contended, that although the Judges might, in strictness, deem themselves competent to try, yet that the English statute, that made the offence with which the prisoner was charged capital, could never be meant to extend to persons under his circumstances. This argument did not prevail, and a plea of not guilty was recorded‡. Eighteen jurymen were challenged by the prisoner, and one by the crown. In the bond upon which the Rajah stood charged, it was recited that Ragonaut Roy Geoo had, in 1758, delivered certain jewels to Bollakey Doss on account of Nundcomar; that on the defeat of the army of Mir Cossim§ they were carried away with the rest of the depositary's property, amid the general plunder of his house; that, arriving in 1765 in Calcutta, he could not produce, nor, in the state of his affairs, pay for the jewels, and therefore he gave his bond for the value. The bond was under the seal of the obligor, and attested by three witnesses, two of whom, Matab Roy and Abdehoo Commaul

Trial, 3rd June.

9th.

* Report of the Select Committee; Reports, vol. vi. p. 719. vol. v. p. 102, et seqq.

† The amra is the sixteenth part of a rupee; consequently the premium here supposed to be secured was one quarter of the principle, or twenty-five per cent.

‡ Trial of Nundcomar, p. 1.—Report of the Select Committee; Reports, vol. v. p. 44.

§ At Buxar, 22 Oct. 1764—See chap. 11.

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Mahomed, affixed their seals, besides writing, and the third, Seilanbut, who was the vakeel or attorney of the Rajah, his hand-writing only.

One of the attesting parties, Commaul O Dien Cawn, who had formerly been called Mahomed Commaul, but changed his name for reasons satisfactorily assigned, said he had never seen the bond executed. The seal was his, but it had been obtained from him by Nundcomar for a particular purpose, and never returned; and he stated that the prisoner had confessed to him that he had used it in attesting the execution of the instrument in question. He produced an impression made while the seal was in his possession, which tallied exactly with that on the bond, and the more remarkably, because both impressions exhibited a corresponding flaw; and, as to the delivery of his seal to Nundcomar, he was corroborated by a witness, named Hussein Ally. Other persons proved conversations, and that the name of Sielanbut was not in his hand-writing. The books of Bollakey Doss afforded additional proof; it was also shewn that the supposed debtor was not in distressed, but rather affluent, circumstances; he never put his seal to obligatory writings; and, when his will was produced, it was not, as the bond was, in Persian, but in the Nagree language, signed, but not sealed. He died in 1769, and the amount of the bond was claimed from his executors, and received by the prisoner.

Defence.

Such was the case for the Crown. Mr. Farrer, in behalf of the accused, had observed that, in England, a prisoner, from his knowledge of the language, had an opportunity of hearing the evidence and making his own defence, which Nundcomar was deprived of; he, therefore, thought it reasonable that his counsel should be permitted to make a defence for him. This proposal was over-ruled, and the trial proceeded, in all respects, as if it had been in England. At the close of the case, the prisoner's counsel stated that he would call witnesses who were present when Bollakey Doss executed the bond: that two witnesses to the bond, then dead, had been living when this transaction came

to the knowledge of Mohun Persand: that he would produce letters written by Bollakey Doss, admitting the bond, and the facts concerning the jewels, and an account signed by Mohun Pesand and Pudmohun Doss, in the presence of his trustees and attorneys, in which the sum contained in the bond is included, as also a paper in the hand-writing of Bollakey Doss, stating the particulars of the transaction; and that entries were made of it in books that were lost, and letters of correspondence between Bollakey Doss and Nundcomar, in which this transaction was mentioned.

Had this defence been substantiated, the prisoner must have been acquitted. Four witnesses swore positively that they were present when the bond was executed; that they heard Bollakey Doss declare his inability to pay the money, and implore Nundcomar to take the security, to which he consented; and it was drawn up by the obligor's own writer. That the attesting parties were well known to the witnesses, and that Mahomed Commaul was quite a different person from him who had been examined for the prosecution. No account was given of the seal, nor was any attempt made to shew that either Nundcomar or Bollakey Doss had ever been in possession of such jewels as were mentioned. The witnesses for the prisoner all swore to the transactions, not only to the same effect, but nearly in the same words; they all, as it was observed, remembered the same facts, and alike forgot others. They all swore to the shape of the seals, but declined swearing to the form or size of the bond, and the position of the names upon it; and they gave the Court much occasion to animadvert on their insincerity and prevarication. Some papers were attempted to be put in; they were declared not to be evidence to be submitted to the jury; but, happening to fall under their inspection, the foreman observed that it was an insult to their understanding to offer them as documents of the date which they purported to bear. The Court, however, cautioned the jury against receiving any prejudice against the prisoner from the papers,

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which, not being admitted in evidence, should not have been seen by them, and they promised to attend to the advice.

15th.

On the seventh day of the trial, the Lord Chief Justice summed up the case with great perspicuity and impartiality. Although he could not, by law, allow the prisoner's counsel to address the jury in his behalf, he received from them written papers containing observations on the law and on the effect of the evidence. These he stated fully to the jury, pronouncing some to be untenable, but recommending others to their most serious attention; and exhorted them to consider on which side the weight of evidence lay; not weighing it in gold scales, and not to convict the prisoner, unless their consciences were fully satisfied, beyond all doubt, of his guilt.

He is found guilty;

After deliberating about an hour, the jury returned a verdict of guilty. Mr. Farrer presented a petition of appeal, requesting that execution might be respited until his Majesty's pleasure should be known; and, this being rejected, he applied, by letter, to the foreman, requesting that he and the rest of the jury would recommend to the judges the delay which had before been refused. This application produced some correspondence, and that being submitted to the judges, they strongly censured the learned counsel for the course he had taken.

and executed.

Nundcomar suffered a disgraceful death by the halter; a fate supposed never before to have befallen a man of his rank in India. This event occasioned a deep and general sensation. The Rajah was much disliked on account of his bad character, and no doubt was entertained that he was guilty, and had endeavoured to sustain his defence by perjured witnesses*; yet the feelings and fears of the natives were powerfully excited by the application of an unknown law, under which a Prince and Bramin could be put to death for a crime deemed by them of inferior import-

* So well convinced were the jury of this fact, that, after bringing in their verdict, they applied to the Court to commit the prisoner's witnesses for perjury; Reports, vol. v. p. 110.

ance, if not purely venial; and it was supposed that this event would diminish their confidence in the justice of government*.

Observations.

From the strong circumstance that Nundcomar had lived unmolested until he had advanced charges of peculation against the Governor-general, it was inferred that the prosecutions against him, and particularly the last, were brought forward at his instigation; and it was said† that, at the time he was denied a respite, he was in the midst of his evidence against Mr. Hastings. It is, however, proper to state that the Governor most explicitly denied, on his oath, before the Supreme Court, that he was in any respect concerned or instrumental in the prosecution; that the evidence of Nundcomar against him had been intirely closed and in a considerable degree acted upon, long before the trial, and that he had most explicitly stated that he had no new facts to advance, or documents to produce‡. But a much more serious objection was made to the propriety, and even the legality, of putting Nundcomar on his trial before a British tribunal, for an offence committed many years before, in a transaction between natives, in which no British right or interest was involved; an offence which, by the law of the country to which both the parties owed subjection, was not the subject of capital punishment, and even in in England was not always, but had recently been made so§. These events gave rise to much observation: the proceeding was deemed discreditable to the judges, and a stain on the character of Mr. Hastings. The execution of Nundcomar afforded no useful example or caution to any; supposing him to be a bad man, his power to do mischief was gone; his impunity could have produced no evil; but, if his conviction were necessary for promulgation of the law among the

* Trial of Nundcomar; also Reports of the Select Committees on the petitions relative to the administration of justice in India; Reports, vol. v. p. 44, et seqq.

† Report, vol. v. p. 413.

‡ Reports, vol. vi. pp. 699 to 708. I have related these proceedings at unusual length, on account of the importance of the occasion, and the discussions to which they gave rise.

§ Namely, by 2nd Geo. II. c. 25, A.D. 1728—9.

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natives, a respite and a pardon would have crowned the administration of Mr. Hastings with a character of clemency and humanity, which would have given him great beauty in the eyes of the people, and afforded him great protection against the attacks of his adversaries. But it is also to be observed, that the power of granting the respite was not a prerogative of the Governor-general: the hostile majority of the Council had the power, if they had thought proper, or had not been swayed by peculiar motives, to have prevented, or at least delayed, the execution, until the mind of the British government could be known*.

* Gleig's Life of Hastings, vol. ii. p. 1.

CHAPTER THE FIFTY-SECOND.

1775—1781.

India.—Debates at the India-House on the conduct of Mr. Hastings—his supposed resignation—a successor appointed—the intelligence received at Calcutta—Death of Colonel Monson—proceedings of General Clavering—resistance of Mr. Hastings—the question referred to the Judges—who decide in his favour.—Death of General Clavering—Mr. Bristow and Mr. Fowke removed.—Application from the Nabob of Oude—his request complied with.—Effect of the late treaty with the Mahrattas—proceedings of the native powers—and of the French—M. De St. Lubin—his public reception—Conduct of the Mahrattas.—Hyder Ally courts the alliance of the English—without success—makes peace with the Mahrattas—his feelings against the English—assisted by the French—at war with the Mahrattas—their disunion and weakness—Disputes in the Council of Madras—Lord Pigot appointed governor—Treatment of the Rajah of Tanjore—pecuniary claims of Mr. Paul Benfield—Lord Pigot opposed by a majority in council—arrested—imprisoned, and deposed.—Proceedings at the India House.—Death of Lord Pigot—coroner's inquest—verdict—the inquisition quashed.—Proceedings in England.—Hyder Ally gains advantages over the Mahrattas.—State of Poonah—detachment sent from Bengal under Colonel Leslie—its progress impeded.—Revolution at Poonah—counter-revolution—conduct of Ragobah—disastrous advance of Colonel Goddard—difficult situation of his troops—a treaty extorted from the agents of government—conduct of Colonel Leslie—his death.—Management of Hyder Ally—his conduct on the capture of Pondicherry—and Mahé—which is taken from the French—and recaptured

by Hyder.—Arrangement respecting the Gentoor Circar—correspondence with Hyder—his plain avowal of hostility—He makes peace with the Mahrattas—invades the Carnatic.—Sir Hector Munro takes the field—Tippoo Saib opposes Colonel Baillie—whose detachment is entirely cut off—cruel treatment of the vanquished—death of Colonel Baillie—Hyder captures Arcot.—Alarming state of Madras—New arrangements—divisions still exist.—Proceedings in Bombay—in Calcutta—Mr. Hastings disobeys the Company's orders—efforts made to arrange differences—supposed agreement—opposition continued—adverse statements of Mr. Hastings and Mr. Francis in council—they fight a duel—Mr. Francis's letter to the Directors—and return to England.—Different views of the war.—Sir Eyre Coote sent to Madras—state of affairs there.—Force of Hyder Ally.—State of the Council and of military affairs—misery of the inhabitants—Hyder's early intelligence.—Movements of the British forces—arrival of the French fleet.—Battle of Porto-novo—its effects.—Battle of Peerambaumm—of Chillanger.—Arrival of Lord Macartney.—Negotiation with the Dutch—their settlements taken—Chittoor taken.—Lord Macartney endeavours to effect peace—writes to the native powers—and to Hyder Ally—his answer.

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10th Oct. 1775, to 17th July, 1776. Debates at the India-House on Mr. Hastings.

His supposed resignation.

THESE events engaged in no slight degree the attention of the East India Company; and it was believed that the resolutions, censuring the treaty with Sujah ul Dowlah, would be followed by proceedings against the Governor-general. It was also said that he had intentions of relinquishing his station, and the assertion received support from a very extraordinary circumstance. Mr. Lauchline Macleane, a gentleman who had filled respectable situations in England, and once had a seat in Parliament, having quitted the Company's service in India, through ill health, was agent here to the Nabob of Arcot. Without solicitation, and quite unexpectedly, he apprized the Court of

Directors, that he was authorized by Mr. Hastings to announce his resignation, and to request that a successor might be nominated. When called before the Court, he declared that the powers with which he was intrusted were mixed with other matters of a nature extremely confidential, so that he could only submit his papers to a select committee. The chairman, deputy chairman, and Mr. Richard Beecher, made the inspection, and reported, that, in a paper in his own hand-writing, Mr. Hastings had declared that he would not continue in the government, unless certain conditions could be obtained, of which those gentlemen saw no probability; and they added, that Mr. George Vansittart and Mr. Stewart had confirmed Mr. Macleane's account of the authority confided to him. The directors accepted the resignation, and in due course a sign manual was obtained, appointing Edward Wheler, esquire, as his successor.

1776. 11th Oct. announced by Mr Macleane

18th. Proceedings of the Directors.

23rd.

A successor appointed. 26th.

This appointment speedily reached Calcutta; but it is said that the Governor-general had received the intelligence some days before, through a person dispatched express from Sir Edward Vernon's squadron at the Cape, and the next day it was publicly known*. At this period, a most important alteration had been effected in the Supreme Council, by the death of Colonel Monson; each party thus became numerically equal, and the casting vote of the Governor-general gave him the superiority.

These resolutions arrive at Calcutta. 1775. June.

1776. Dec. Death of Col. Monson.

On the morning after the arrival of the dispatches from the Directors, General Clavering ordered a summons to be issued, in his name as Governor-general, to Mr. Barwell and Mr. Francis, to meet in council with him at eleven o'clock, framed a proclamation, and issued other necessary orders.

1777. 20th June. Proceedings of General Clavering.

Mr. Francis attended; but Mr. Barwell remained with Mr. Hastings, who, considering himself legally in possession of the government, refused, although

Resistance of Mr. Hastings.

* For this fact, I have only the authority of a pamphlet, intitled, "A short Account of the Resignation of Warren Hastings, Esquire," p. 15. The tract, it is to be observed, is written in a spirit of great rancour against the Governor-general. But the letter he wrote and the intire narrative are in Gleig's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 520.

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formally required to deliver up the keys of the New Fort and of the treasuries. General Clavering took the oaths of office, assumed the chair, and issued a proclamation; but, during the sitting, a letter was received from Mr. Hastings and Mr. Barwell, styling themselves the Governor in council legally assembled, denying that Mr. Hastings had vacated his office, and declaring that they would assist and maintain, by all legal means, the authority and trusts which had been reposed in him. General Clavering, as a mere member of the council, was required to attend the meeting called by Mr. Hastings; the Persian interpreter refused to translate the proclamation, unless authorized by the known Governor-general; the secretary to the council was ordered not to issue summonses for the meeting of that body by any order but those which he had been used to recieve, and the dispatches received from Europe were demanded from him. These papers were stated to be in the hands of General Clavering; and Mr. Barwell came and required them, but they were withheld. It was also announced that the Judges of the Supreme Court were assembled at the Council House in the revenue department, and that Mr. Hastings was determined to abide by their opinion on the matter. General Clavering and Mr. Francis, at the time this information was received, were preparing a letter with documents for the same persons; and, the next morning, all the four Judges agreed that the office of Governor-general had not been vacated, and that the actual assumption of the government by the member of council next in succession to Mr. Hastings, in consequence of any deductions to be made from the papers communicated to them, would be absolutely illegal. This opinion, which was supported by cogent reasons, was acquiesced in by those who had required it, and Mr. Hastings retained his station. It was attempted to remove General Clavering from his place in council and his military command, by a resolution of the revenue board; but the Judges declared that they had no such authority, and proceedings were reversed. Each party sent a narrative, with observations, to the Direc-

The question referred to the Judges of the Supreme Courts.

21st. Who decide in Mr. Hastings' favour.

23rd.

25th.

tors. Mr. Hastings did not disavow Mr. Maclean as his agent, but insisted that he had exceeded his authority in tendering the resignation. The Directors disapproved of the Governor-general's conduct in all respects, and slightly censured, although they generally sanctioned, that of his opponents; and they declared that measures necessary to retrieve the honour of the Company, and to prevent the like abuse in future, should engage their earliest and most serious deliberation. This dispatch was not written until eighteen months after the events alluded to; and, as it then only promised future consideration, but dictated no immediate proceedings, it was quite unsatisfactory to General Clavering's party. In fact it does not appear that the Directors ever again adverted to the matter*. Mr. Francis complained that they had broken their promise, in not giving to him and his friends the support which they had a right to expect from the constant approbation which had been expressed toward them, and their disapprobation of Mr. Hastings and Mr. Barwell†.

1778. Dec. 23.

Death of General Clavering.

The ascendancy which Mr. Hastings had acquired in the council through the decease of Colonel Monson, might have been destroyed on the arrival of Mr. Wheler, who generally voted with Mr. Francis; but before that period, death had also removed General Clavering, and the Governor-general exercised his authority, subject to the often-repeated, but rather unmeaning observation, that he governed the country by his casting vote.

1777. August.

Operations in finance.

In the exercise of this authority, his operations to improve the finances of the Company were the subject

* See the pamphlet referred to in the preceding note, and the Ninth Report of the Select Committee, and Appendixes, No. 114; Reports, vol. vi. p. 82, and pp. 394 to 433.

† Fifth Report from the Select Committee; Reports, vol. v. pp. 440 and 659. This conduct of the Company occasioned a fine display of eloquent censure from Mr. Burke. "Consider the fate of those who have met with the applauses of the Directors. Colonel Monson, one of the best of men, had his days shortened by the applauses, destitute of the support, of the Company. General Clavering, whose panegyric was made in every dispatch from England, whose hearse was bedewedwith the tears, and hung round with the eulogies of the Court of Directors, burst an honest and indignant heart at the treachery of those who ruined him by their praises." Burke's Works, 8vo. vol. iv. p. 100.

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1783.

of much remark and crimination. It is not intended to enter into particulars; but the mode and terms of the contract for letting lands were much censured; and it was also inferred, from circumstances, that, in many instances, Mr. Hastings, under the semblance of favouring his dependents, had secured undue profits to himself*.

Mr. Bristow removed and Mr. Middleton replaced.

1776. 2nd Dec.

In some instances he appeared to be actuated by an undignified spirit of retaliation. He reinstated Mr. Middleton at Benares, recalling Mr. Bristow his successor, although subject to no imputation, and no charge intended against him†. In like manner, Mr. Francis Fowke, the son of Joseph who had been tried with Nundcomar for conspiracy, was dismissed from the office of resident at Benares; the purposes for which he was appointed being, as it was said, accomplished; but the next day Mr. Daniel Barwell was sent as resident, with the addition of Mr. Thomas Graham for his assistant‡.

Mr. Fowke removed.

22nd

23rd.

Application of the Nabob of Oude.

In another instance, an arrangement, in part at least sanctioned by the Directors, was subverted. By the intervention of General Clavering's majority, Mahomed Reza Khan had been invested with the government of the Nabob of Oude's household, and the intire administration of criminal justice; the Governor-general vehemently protesting against the appointment. The young nabob, Mobareck ul Dowlah, wrote a strong complaint of the trouble and uneasiness he suffered from Reza Khan, arraigning his conduct in many particulars, and requesting power to assume the management of his own affairs, as, at his age, the holy law required. Mr. Hastings, not meaning to decide precipitately, ordered that the letter should be circulated, and its requisition maturely considered. At the next council, Mr. Barwell being absent, it was carried, by Mr. Francis and Mr. Wheler, that the letter should be referred to the Directors; but when Mr. Barwell returned, the resolution was rescinded, and the Nabob's

1778. 17th Feb.

2nd March.

* Sixth Report of the Select Committee; Reports, vol. v. p. 866. Ninth Report of the same Committee; Reports, vol. vi. p. 89.

† Fifth Report of Select Committee; Rep. vol. v. p. 690.

‡ Same, pp. 667, 703-4.

1777.

request complied with. Terms were imposed, among which were an allowance to the Munny Begum of the yearly sum of seventy-two thousand rupees (£9,000), for the maintenance of the dependent relatives of the late Nabob, and half that amount on the like account to the Nabob's mother, the Baboo Begum*.

5th. Complied with.

All these measures were strongly disapproved of and countermanded by the Directors; but, before their orders could be transmitted, the affairs of India had assumed an aspect which rendered them comparatively of small importance.

Effect of the late treaties with the Mahrattas.

The late treaty of peace with the Mahrattas was unsatisfactory to all parties. It was disapproved by the Bombay government, as a surrender of important British interests; the ministers at Poonah resented it as unjust towards them; and Ragobah, incensed at being made a sacrifice, refused to accede, and was reported to have received promises of assistance from Nizam Ally Khan and Hyder Ally, while the Poonah ministers remonstrated against the protection which was afforded him. The perplexities of the parties were increased by the escape from prison of Sudabah, a descendant of the ancient peishwa family, and next in succession to Ragobah, with whom it was supposed he intended to associate, in opposition to the ministers. The force he was enabled to collect was defeated by that of the ministers, and the remainder of it took refuge in Salsette. Sudabah himself, flying by sea, was inveigled on shore by Ragojee Angria, treacherously delivered up to his enemies, and put to death as a common malefactor†. It was said, at a subsequent period, that all our proceedings with respect to the Mahrattas had been unjust and imprudent. After the death of Madbarrow, the union of that great body which constituted the Mahratta empire was dissolved; the principal chiefs, claiming separate authority, acknowledged the infant pieshwa merely as matter of

30th Oct.

17th Dec.

* Fifth Report of the Select Committee; Reports, vol. v. p. 726, et seqq.

† Mr. Francis's Letter to the Court of Directors, dated 19th November, 1781. Reports, vol. v p. 439.

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1777.

July.

form: how, then, could it be the interest of the British government to restore the union of such an empire, or to vest its united strength in the hands of a single person? The articles of the treaty had not been carried into effect when Colonel Upton returned to Calcutta.

Views of the native powers,

As the probability that Great Britain would fail in the attempt to subjugate her revolted colonies increased, and as rumours were industriously spread that her cause was adversely viewed by the great powers of Europe, the princes of India conceived hopes of being able to exterminate those whom they had hitherto been unable to resist. The French, anticipating a war, employed, as a secret agent at Poonah, the Chevalier De St. Lubin, who was received by the pieshwa with honours, and treated with more attention than had been displayed toward the English residents. Evasive answers were given by the Poonah government to the inquiries of the English: St. Lubin had considered it his duty to pay his respects to the Court, and should remain during the rainy season, which was nearly approaching. Nearly one hundred and fifty pieces of ordnance, of large calibre, with a copious store of copper and broad cloth, were landed from his frigate and offered for sale; and the Durbar agreed that two more ships, which he expected to arrive at the coast, should winter in some of their harbours. Mr. Mostyn, the English resident, remonstrated with the Poonah government, representing the intriguing and encroaching disposition of the French, their alliance with Hyder Ally, and the probability that they aimed at obtaining a factory at Poonah, and a sea-port on the Malabar coast: but these were treated as groundless alarms; and they sent, with Colonel Upton to Calcutta, a vakeel, to furnish a correct statement of the facts relating to the French agent, which, they knew, the Governor and Council of Bombay would represent in an injurious light. It was even said to have been discovered that M. St. Lubin was an impostor, unauthorized by the government in France or

and of the French.

8th July. Public reception of M. De St. Lubin.

or at Pondicherry, and that his papers were fictitious*.

1777.

Account of M. De St. Lubin.

It appears, upon the whole, that this person was one of those who may with safety be employed in indirect, underhand negotiation; their government taking the benefit of any good they may accomplish, but disavowing them if their safety or credit made it necessary. He had sailed from Bordeaux with the knowledge of M. De Sartines, but without authentic credentials: he had been allowed to take out, as if they were matter of merchandize, a large quantity of military stores, of an inferior description: although not officially recognized at Pondicherry, his arrival was not unexpected, and he was never formally disavowed. His plausible and insinuating manners enabled him to get his bills accepted, and secured his reception among French gentlemen already in India; and he hoped to lay the foundation, if he could not complete the structure, of an advantageous alliance with some of the Mahratta powers. In a short time, he quarrelled with his associates, who laid open all his plans and his means to the governments of Bengal and Bombay. On their remonstrance, he was ordered to leave Poonah: the Mahrattas discovering that his promises were mere delusions, all respect was withdrawn, and his name fell into oblivion†.

November.

December.

1778.

June.

Conduct of the Mahrattas.

However insignificant this adventurer might be, his reception left no doubt of the anxious desire of France to resume her ascendancy in India, nor of the readiness of the Mahrattas to forward projects or form alliances injurious to England. The delay in executing the conditions in the treaty of peace was invidiously and injuriously imputed to the Bombay government; but this retardment arose frequently from the Mahrattas, who, by interposing obstacles, occasioned the delays of which they complained.

Hyder Ally.

It is now necessary to recall to memory Hyder Ally, one of those individuals who are formed to make

* Sixth Report of the Committee of Secrecy; Reports, vol. viii. p. 273, and Appendix to same, Nos. 5, 6, 7, 8; same vol. pp. 378, 9, 80.

† Sixth Report of Committee of Secrecy, and Appendix 16, et passim to 101.

CHAP. LII.

1778.

a great display in the history of their times, and to effect great alterations in the projects of the wise and the hopes of the brave: he arose, amid the troubles and difficulties which agitated India, to a fearful height, shone with a portentous glare, and shed a baneful, almost a fatal, influence over the interests of Britain.

1769. 3rd April.

When the inglorious war, which had been rashly entered into, against him was terminated by a hasty treaty of peace, it was his earnest desire to engage the English in an alliance offensive and defensive. The first part of the proposal was rejected; the other was by necessity wrung from the Madras government, contrary to their judgment. The stipulation was, that if either of the contracting parties were attacked, the other should afford assistance to expel the enemy*.

He courts the alliance of the English.

Soon after the conclusion of this compact, Hyder, who united with the character of a brave and indefatigable warrior, that of a judicious and subtle politician, wrote to the governor of Madras, stating his design of

29th May.

recovering some territory which had been two years in the hands of Madbarrow, and desiring that he would, for form sake, send to his assistance an officer and a

16th June.

battalion of sepoys. This was refused, as amounting to a declaration of war against the Mahrattas. A sub-

1770. 7th—21st Mar.

sequent application was made, when the Mahrattas had entered the territories of Mysore, and taken several forts; and, although the aid required was only ostensible, the chief offered to purchase it with three lacks of rupees (£37,500). The Board evaded this request on many pretences, nor could assistance be obtained, when the Mahrattas, elated by success, seemed

1771. Without success.

determined to destroy Hyder, and annex his dominions to their own. Even when the chieftain, unable to oppose his enemies in the field, and on the eve of being obliged to shelter himself in his forts, exhausted of

1772. 23rd January.

provisions, represented to the government the advantages of joining him, he received for answer, that orders from the Company prevented their sending

* Ante, chap. 16 First Report of the Secret Committee; Reports, vol. vii. p. 169.

troops to his assistance. Under these circumstances, Hyder Ally made such peace as he could; and, with a bitter feeling against those to whose support he had considered himself intitled, he advised them of it, in conformity, as he said, to their subsisting friendship. 1772. 3rd July. He makes peace with the Mahrattas.

Left by this treaty in a state of diminished grandeur and augmented danger, the chief of the Mysore vigilantly regarded events passing around him, and anxiously awaited the time which should enable him again to emerge in splendour with renewed hopes of greatness. It was felt that his aggrandizement was the event most likely to be fatal to the Poonah government; and, under the influence of that apprehension, attempts had been made to form an alliance between Mahommed Ali, the Nabob of Arcot, the Mahrattas, and the Madras government against him. Nor, perhaps, was it unknown to that vigilant and politic chief, that, although the English would not be party to such a confederacy, it met with their avowed approbation. Whatever he might know or apprehend, Hyder conducted himself with great prudence; he exhibited no discontent, but quietly continued to strengthen and discipline his troops, until the dissensions in the Mahratta states enabled him to regain all the possessions which had been wrested from him*. His feelings against the English. 1771. 1774.

In his efforts to recover and augment his greatness, Hyder Ally was assisted by the French, who secretly supplied him with military stores; and he attempted a treaty with the Nabob, which, at that time, their mutual jealousies rendered ineffectual. In the years which followed, he was observed to use strenuous exertions in increasing his army; and, as the progress of events in Europe and America made concealment less necessary, his connexion with the French was more open and avowed, and no doubt was entertained of his meditating some great design against the Nabob or the Company. While engaged in an active and uncertain war against the Mahrattas, the nature of his Assisted by the French. 1775—6—7.

* First Report of the Committee of Secrecy; Reports, vol. vii. p. 18; and Appendix, No. 19 to 23; same vol. p. 176 to 194; Life of Sir David Baird, vol. i. p. 8 to 10.

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1777. Hyder at war with the Mahrattas.

further operations could not be exactly anticipated. His close dissimulation and friendly professions toward the English made the discovery additionally difficult*; but his dissatisfaction and distrust were disclosed by indirect circumstances. Affecting friendship for Ragobah, he strenuously dissuaded him from trusting a deceitful people, who made no scruple in breaking any firm agreement, while, on the other hand, he was intriguing with the ministerial party and the Nizam against him and his allies, representing the ascendancy of the English in the government of Poonah as the sure means of subjugating the country†.

Their disunion and weakness.

If the Mahrattas, while united and guided by wise councils, were able to resist their ambitious neighbour, far different was their condition at the present juncture, when divided interests and mutual suspicion, enterprizes which inspired perpetual jealousy, and intrigues which destroyed all shew of confidence, diminished their strength, and enfeebled their councils. Among those who ruled at Poonah, more than one aimed at superior or exclusive authority, while a considerable party still adhered to Ragobah, whose claims were countenanced, if not openly supported, at Bombay. Some of the native powers too were favourable to his cause, particularly the Nabob of Arcot, and the Rajah of Berar; while some, like the Subah of the Deccan, were doubtful; and Holkar and Scindiah belied their amicable professions by hostile acts‡. The other ministers were divided and jealous of each other; their authority not generally acknowledged, and their army, under Hurry Punt, weak, disaffected, and ill paid§.

At Bengal, the administration at Poonah was deemed so confused and unsteady, and the rights of Ragobah so unquestionable, that, until he should be in possession of the subahship, or the regency, the govern-

* Same Report, Appendix 24, 25, 26.

† Fifth Report of the Committee of Secrecy; Rep. vol. vii. p. 782; Appendix, No. 150, vol. viii. p. 230.

‡ Fifth Report, vol. vii. p. 782; and the various numbers of the Appendix there referred to.

§ Sixth Report of same Committee, vol. viii. p. 409.

ment of the Mahratta empire could never be settled on a permanent or equitable footing.

1777. Disputes in the Council of Madras

At this most critical period, when firmness, unanimity, and a disinterested regard for the public good alone, were so imperiously demanded, the spirit of faction and discord raged in all the presidencies. Madras had for several years been a scene of contention and commotion. In consequence of disputes among the native powers, to which the English became party, Tanjore was taken, the rajah, Tuljiagee, deposed, and the Nabob of Arcot put in possession of that sovereignty, together with the seaport town of Nagore, which the Rajah had sold to the Dutch, but which it was now asserted he had no right to convey, and, as the Dutch were not sufficiently powerful to vindicate their claim by an appeal to arms, they submitted without a struggle.

1773.

The news of this extraordinary proceeding did not, at first, produce any notice, either in approbation or censure from the Directors. It was, however, much agitated by them, and in the Court of Proprietors; and when a new governor was to be appointed, the Directors nominated Mr. Rumbold; but the Court, rejecting him, decided in favour of Lord Pigot. The intent of this preference could not be misunderstood. He had been governor of Fort St. George when the treaty was made which fixed the Rajah of Tanjore in his authority, and was known to entertain a strong opinion on the policy of keeping his dominions separate from those of the Nabob. Twelve years had elapsed since Mr. Pigot had ceased to be governor; age had overtaken him, accompanied with honours, for he had successively been created a baronet and a peer of Ireland. His circumstances were sufficiently affluent, and retirement and ease appeared to be the objects of his rational desires: but the inclination to be useful, and perhaps ambition to restore a system which he had formed, and considered to be improperly abandoned, led him again to visit the shores of India.

1775. Lord Pigot appointed Governor.

1775. 11th Dec.

Aroused by the vote of the Court of Proprietors, the Directors gave full powers to the new Governor to

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1776.

reinstate the Rajah, and they expressed disapprobation of the proceedings against him. So far as the mere obedience to this direction could afford satisfaction to the deposed prince, it was speedily effected; but the ruin of his affairs could not be repaired, nor could the claims and disputes arising from the transactions of an intruded, but acknowledged, government, be speedily explained or adjusted. On the taking of Tanjore, the Rajah and his family were put in close confinement. He was stripped of his cloaths, his jewels, his elephants, and his horses; his fort was plundered, his treasury, his armoury, every thing which the east holds sacred was violated: the apartments of the women were forced, their persons stripped of their ornaments, and effects to the amount of ten millions of pagodas (£4,000,000) were carried off. The revenues of the country, during the two years and a half that the Nabob ursurped it, amounted to fifty lacks of pagodas (£2,000,000) more; for, as he knew not how long he might maintain his usurpation, he set no bounds to his rapacity, although he reduced the inhabitants to poverty and misery*.

11th April. Treatment of the Rajah of Tanjore.

Numerous claims were advanced for debts incurred during the Nabob's government. One was produced by Mr. Paul Benfield, amounting to four hundred and five thousand pagodas, lent to the Nabob, and secured by assignments of the revenue; and one hundred and eighty thousand confided to individuals on the security of the coming crop. This great demand, amounting to £234,000, was viewed with astonishment, as the situation and apparent circumstances of the claimant did not warrant, and some previous declarations tended to discredit, the supposition that he possessed so much wealth, or that he would have employed it in such loans. It was therefore considered by Lord Pigot and many other persons as a mere collusive stratagem, contrived between the Nabob and Mr. Benfield to acquire further spoil, and to continue the system by which the King of Tanjore had already been oppressed.

Pecuniary claim of Mr. Benfield.

* Copied from Lord Pigot's defence, quarto, 1777, p. 66; and see the authorities there referred to.

1776 May and June.

This claim divided the council; the majority was in favour of the claimant, and the Governor was in the minority. The same event occurred on several subsequent occasions, the majority being always two; until Lord Pigot, irritated at such perpetual opposition, and anxious to carry into effect the plan of reform which he had conceived, and to obey the instructions of the Directors in replacing the system of 1762, endeavoured to frustrate the proceedings of his opponents by insisting that he was an integral part of the government, and that no act could be valid without his express sanction. The majority now resolved to appoint Colonel Stuart to a command at Tanjore, while Lord Pigot, strenuous for the nomination of Mr. Russel, having refused to put the question in the council, or affix his signature to the instructions, a letter was framed by which the secretary was ordered to sign them in the name of the council. When two members of the majority, Mr. George Stratton and Mr. Henry Brooke, had affixed their names to this instrument, his lordship seized the paper, and presented as a charge against them that very act, as subversive of the authority of government: by the regulations of the Company, members under accusation could not vote. The Governor having thus gained the ascendancy, by means of his own casting vote, rendered his majority permanent by suspending the two accused members. The opposing party declined attending the council summoned for the following day by the President; framed a protest, declaring themselves the governing body, and claiming obedience, which they dispatched to the commander of the troops, and to all other persons holding authority in Madras. Lord Pigot and his council passed a vote of suspension against all the opposite party; but Colonel Stuart, who had the command of the troops, Sir Robert Fletcher being ill, was directed to arrest the person of Lord Pigot, a command which he executed with such address as to prevent any resistance, or even a protest, and thus the government was overthrown, and the majority remained in full possession of all its powers.

Lord Pigot opposed by a majority in council.

August.

Arrested,

24th August.

and deposed.

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1777. 10th June. Proceedings at the India House.

These proceedings were amply discussed at the India House; where, after many contradictory resolutions had been passed, it was ordered that Lord Pigot be reinstated; but he was directed to resign immediately, and return to England by the first ship. His opponents in the council were re-called, and the military, who had acted in his deposition and confinement, were to be tried by courts martial at Madras. Whether this termination of the dispute could afford triumph or satisfaction to Lord Pigot, or whether it was, in effect, an augmentation of his injuries, it is needless to inquire, for death had placed him beyond its operation. Age, fatigue, irritation, and an unfavourable climate, had terminated his existence in about eight months after his confinement. A coroner's inquest sat on the body of this unfortunate nobleman; and, after a long and painful investigation, brought in a verdict declaring that George Stratton, Henry Brooke, Charles Floyer, Archdale Palmer, Francis Jourdan, George Mackay, Sir Robert Fletcher, Colonel James Stuart, Lieutenant Colonel James Eidingtoun, and Captain Arthur Lysaght, were guilty of wilful murder. This determination created no slight emotion in the public: explanations were sought, and one of the inquest declared in a letter, afterward made public, that the jury had been equally divided between a verdict of murder and manslaughter, until, on re-consideration, two of the body assented to the verdict which was finally returned. On investigation, many irregularities were found in the proceeding; and, on application to the judges of the Court of Supreme Judicature at Calcutta, and in pursuance of their opinion and advice, the inquisition was quashed, and no further proceedings instituted*. In England, upon an address

11th May. Death of Lord Pigot.

12th May to 7th August. Coroner's inquest.

1779. 20th Dec.

* On this subject a great variety of pamphlets appeared on both sides. They have been consulted for the purpose of this narrative; but their details are not sufficiently interesting to claim minute quotation. The most important are Lord Pigot's Defence, 4to. 1777; Original Papers relative to Tanjore; and two Letters from Mahommed Ali Khan, Nabob of Arcot, published by Cadell in 1777; to one of which is subjoined a state of facts relative to Tanjore, with an Appendix of papers: Lord Pigot's Narrative; and the collection of papers relative to the coroner's inquest, with the defences of the parties accused. See also the Second Report from the Committee of Secrecy, and Appendix.

of the House of Commons, a criminal information was filed in the Court of King's Bench against Messrs. Stratton, Mackay, Brooke, and Floyer, for arresting and imprisoning Lord Pigot, and they were all found guilty. When they came up for judgment, the court fully admitted the force of circumstances, and the irregular proceedings of the noble Governor, as an extenuation, although not a justification of their conduct, and they were fined one thousand pounds each*.

1779.

1780. 3rd. Feb.

Hyder Ally gains advantages over the Mahrattas.

While such dissensions were producing their baleful effects, an invasion of the Mysore was commenced by the Mahrattas. Tippoo Saib, the warlike son of Hyder, was first dispatched to oppose them, which he did with vigour and success; and Hyder himself shortly afterward defeated them in two engagements, and compelled them to retreat to Panchmal, on the northern bank of the Kistna, in hopes of gaining assistance from allies; and the victor, becoming an invader in his turn, crossed the Tongebodras in pursuit†.

1777. Dec.

State of Poonah.

While military calamity thus beset the Poonah government, and their councils were distracted by French intrigue and the pressure of demands from Bombay, fresh confusion arose from the death of Ram Rajah, their sovereign. The interest of Ragobah was pressed by a party; but his known attachment to England, and the strong inclination which some of the ministry felt to favour the French, even at the expense of yielding up to them Choul, or some other sea-port, rendered his cause less hopeful than before. A negotiation had been entered into on the part of Siccaram Baboo, Maroba Furnese, and Burcheba Ronder, with Mr. Lewis, the resident at Poonah, for bringing in Ragobah by the aid of a British force; but the Supreme Council refusing to act unless those chiefs would make the application under their own siccahs and hand-writ-

1777. Dec.

1788. Jan.

* Trial of George Stratton and others; Howell's State Trials, vol. xxi, p. 1045, being the first complete and authentic report given to the public: there was previously a pamphlet, called An Abstract of the Trial, which was well and fairly compiled.

† Sixth Report of same Committee; Appendix, No. 30, 34; Reports, vol. viii. pp. 435, 437.

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1778.

ing, they treacherously or timidly refused, and the project was abandoned.

Feb. Detachment sent to Bombay under Colonel Leslie.

Under all these circumstances, it was deemed necessary to strengthen the military force at Bombay, and a detachment of six battalions of sepoys and a company of native artillery, with proper ordnance and ammunition, was formed from the troops assembled at Allahabad, and directed to assemble at Korah, in the neighbourhood of Calpee. Colonel Leslie commanded the detachment, the artillery being confided to Major Baillie. As their march, which was nearly a thousand miles, lay, in part, through the Mahratta dominions, a dustuct, or pass, was applied for. Immediate compliance was at first promised; but some delays having been created by differences of opinion in the presidencies, the Durbah of Poonah made objections and difficulties, and their progress was impeded during a period in which important changes occurred.

Progress impeded.

26th March. Revolution at Poonah.

An unexpected revolution took place at Poonah. Marobah, at the head of ten thousand horse, suddenly encamped on the opposite bank of the river. Fifty of his men entered the town, took possession of the palace, and issued orders in the name and on behalf of Ragobah. No resistance was offered, and every thing appeared favourable to the cause which the English had espoused, and to which the new government affected great devotion. But as demands were pressed, and engagements required, difficulty, reserve, and estrangement, began to prevail; and it was easy to perceive that an interest adverse to the original expectations was gaining ground. A new revolution, sudden and rapid as the first, subverted all the hopes of Marobah; he was deposed by a body of troops under Scindia; and, with many of his partizans, secured in prison. Nor was the conduct of Ragobah himself frank and sincere; he evaded positive engagements, or executed them only with reluctance, while the Bombay government and Colonel Goddard supported him with four thousand five hundred troops, with arms and ammunition, and with pecuniary loans, to an amount which drew on them severe animadversion. The present sup-

July. Counter revolution.

Conduct of Ragobah.

ply was fifteen thousand rupees (£1875); but he was already indebted to the British government twenty-four lacks seventy-two thousand seven hundred and seventy-five rupees (£309,097), an enormous advance, considering their distressed finances, difficulties, and dangers, and the conduct of Ragobah was replete with follies and inconsistencies: he expected that a standard, raised in his behalf, would instantly be followed by Holkar, Scindia, and other powerful chieftains. They were indeed in arms, but stood aloof, waiting to promote some particular views and interests of their own. The Mahrattas, avoiding a conflict, retreated before the British forces, laying waste the country. At length, they found the moment to shew themselves in front; and when Colonel Goddard was within sixteen miles of Poonah, he was opposed by an army so powerful, that he was obliged to retreat to Worgaum, after sustaining a vigorous attack, in which he lost above three hundred men and part of his baggage. The lukewarm friends of Ragobah now proposed, or rather commanded, that he should give himself up to Scindia, declaring that to be the only condition on which the English could remain at peace with them; on this condition alone they might return quietly. Ragobah declared his intention to comply, unmindful of a treaty he had recently executed, and, alleging that the English sought only their own aggrandizement, he was, at his own request, surrendered. This acquiescence did not procure the safe passage of the troops to Bombay. Mr. Camac, Colonel Egerton, and Mr. Mostyn, accompanied the army as a committee, to assist in settling the government at Poonah; but they now employed themselves in forming a treaty for the safety of the forces. The vakeel, or envoy, from the Mahrattas, raised questions as to the breach of the treaty entered into with Colonel Upton; and, at last, declared peremptorily that, unless a new treaty were made, the English army must remain in its present position. In effect, the troops were surrounded, and prisoners. Thus circumstanced, these agents, exceeding their authority, became parties to a compact, by which, in consideration of the army being allowed to proceed

1778.

Disastrous advance of Colonel Goddard.

1779. January.

11th January.

1778. 27th Nov.

Difficult situation of the English troops.

1779. 15th Jan.

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1779.

A treaty extorted from the agents of government.

to Bombay, it was acknowledged that the British government had violated the treaty made by Colonel Upton; that they were unjustly in possession of Salsette, with its dependencies, and the Mahaals of Broach; these, with all other acquisitions of the Company in those parts since 1756, were therefore to be delivered up, and no aid or protection in future to be afforded to Ragobah, or any enemies of the Sircar. That the parties to this treaty, which is called the convention of Wargum, had no right to make it, Mr. Camac knew; he acknowledged his want of authority, and said that Scindia was equally apprised of it; but there was too much insincerity and duplicity in acquiring, by such means, a great present advantage, when the other contracting power could not gain the benefits which it appeared to bestow. It was immediately declared void; but Colonel Goddard was empowered to treat for a renewal of the treaty of Poorunder. A long course of negotiation ensued, in which the Poonah government held that of England in a state of uncertainty, in expectation that events would soon enable them to act with beneficial decision, without incurring any present risque.

Colonel Leslie's detachment.

During these transactions, the detachment from Bengal, under Colonel Leslie, made no useful progress. According to his instructions, he professed and observed strict amity toward the Mahratta chiefs; but, as they viewed his march with jealousy, and sometimes

May.

resisted it by force, he was at last obliged to retaliate, and took possession of the fort of Calpee. But, although the state of the times forcibly required his advance, he wasted whole months in making treaties and levying contributions: he alleged that the rainy season prevented his movements; while, on the other hand, it was said that no season could be so proper for

October.

that purpose. His treaties were disavowed, his levies censured; an order for superseding him, and appointing Colonel Goddard in his stead, was issued; but death saved him from a knowledge of his misfortune,

His death.

and his successor took an uninvidious command*.

* For these facts, see the Sixth Report of the Committee of Secrecy, ubi sup.; and Appendix, where referred to in the Report.

1779.

All these events were influenced, in no slight degree, by the acts and intrigues of Hyder Ally. That wary and ambitious leader, waging successful war against the Mahrattas, veiled his further intentions in impenetrable mystery, and conducted his negotiations with consummate address. His great aim was to prevent a junction of the English with the Mahrattas, and conciliate the good-will of the French; and he hoped ultimately, by a judicious union with the other great chiefs, to exterminate the English, the only formidable European power on that continent. It may be doubted that these were always his views. Perhaps, if the British government had extended toward him the hand of unreserved friendship in 1769, he might have become firmly attached to them; but a first distaste grew into rancorous hatred, and rendered him the most inveterate, as he afterward became the most formidable, of our enemies. So cautious was his conduct, that, although his intercourse with the French was too well known to be doubted, no fair occasion offered to question his proceedings. He proposed to assist the English in establishing Ragobah, and generally professed the most friendly intentions. When a war between Great Britain and France became publicly known, he assumed a greater reserve, and declined an alliance which was then proposed to him; but, when Pondicherry was taken, he congratulated the Madras government on the event, and promised to make the necessary arrangements for an interview preparatory to a friendly treaty.

Management of Hyder Ally.

1778. 4th July.

His conduct on the capture of Pondicherry. 29th Nov.

These illusions were dissipated when the British forces prepared to capture Mahé, the only place remaining to the French. This settlement, eligibly situated on the coast of Malabar, being within the dominions of the king of Cartinaad, a tributary to Hyder, was declared by him to be under his protection; he would assist the French in resisting any attack, and avenge it, if made, by invading the Carnatic. Still the Madras government did not believe his intentions to be hostile, although they made a movement of some troops, and earnestly exhorted the menaced Nabob to

With respect to Mahé.

Dec.

CHAP. LII.

1779. January.

assemble forces and use vigilance. After much deliberation, the attack on Mahé was ordered, while hopes were entertained of an amicable arrangement with Hyder; but their accomplishment was rendered improbable by his great successes against the Mahrattas, and the capture of the Bombay army.

19th March.

The fort was taken in two days without difficulty; but Colonel Braithwaite, being informed that Hyder's forces were advancing, retained a portion of his troops, and proposed to form an alliance with the Nairs and some petty princes who were disaffected to Hyder. The government positively refused assent; the petty princes did in fact rebel; but Hyder's troops reduced the insurgents, placed themselves in strong redoubts around Mahé, and, with the assistance of those whom they had subjugated, so straightened and distressed it, that Colonel Braithwaite, after blowing up the fort and shipping off the stores, evacuated the place; and it was taken possession of by Hyder's officer from Calicut*.

Which is taken from the French

June.

And re-captured by Hyder.

Arrangements respecting the Guntoor Circar.

1778.

The Guntoor Circar was held by Bazalet Jung, under a grant for life, from his brother Nizam ul Dowlah, sujah of the Deccan; but he could not dispose of it without the subah's consent. To prevent the introduction of French troops and stores by means of the port of Mootapillee, the Madras government made one ineffectual attempt to gain the harbour at least, if not the whole Circar, by treaty with Nizam; and afterward applied, not secretly, but with his perfect knowledge, to his brother, who, by treaty, let to them the Guntoor Circar at a rent, and on certain conditions of maintaining troops for defending his dominions. In pursuance of the treaty, Bazalet Jung dismissed from his service Monsieur Lally and all the French under his command; but they were immediately taken into the employ of the Nizam.

Nov.

1779. 23rd April.

Relying on this treaty, Bazalet Jung represented that Hyder Ally, having conquered the Cuddepah country, was proceeding to attack his territories, and demanded the stipulated succour. The presidency sent

* First Report of the Committee of Secrecy; Reports, vol. vii. p. 20 to 23, and Appendix.

1779.

him three battalions of sepoys, one company of artillery and six field pieces, under the command of Colonel Harper: he reached the Cuddepah country; but on attempting to proceed, he found all the passes secured by Hyder's officers, and was obliged to retreat. That chieftain had complained, at Bazalet's court, against the transfer of the Guntoor to the English; who, he said, ought not to be allowed a footing in that part of the country, and wished his Killedars to rent it, as nobody would then dare to attack the Circar. His letter concluded in the following words: "It is not in "my power to consent to his Excellency's giving up "the Guntoor Circar to my old and bitter enemies, for "it joins to my country. What are the English, whose "name gives so much alarm to the people of this "country? How did I encounter them in war? How "often were they not defeated by my victorious troops? "Why should they be so much feared, that their "protection should be solicited? If his Excellency "and I are joined, we shall stand in fear of no one."

August.

Dread of the chief of Mysore produced vacillation in the conduct of Bazalet Jung. At first, he was most anxious for the advance of the forces under Colonel Harper; but, when that officer had surmounted his difficulties, and was ready to proceed, he was stopped by the orders of Bazalet, who was crouching under the threats of Hyder, reinforced by the menacing persuasions of his brother, the Nizam. After much correspondence, the Madras government forbad the march of Colonel Baillie, who had succeeded Colonel Harper in the command; they insisted on the validity of the treaty, and directed him to resist any attempt on the Guntoor Circar; but restrained him from acting offensively against any power, without positive orders.

Octr.

Means had been taken, during these transactions, to learn from himself the real sentiments and intentions of Hyder. After sending many evasive dispatches, he said that, when a friendship, confirmed by a treaty, subsisted between the Company and him, he imagined that it would not have been violated; but, from the expedition to Mahé, and the sending troops

Correspondence with Hyder.

June.

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1779.

to Bazalet Jung, he conceived there was a determination to break with him at all events. That, out of regard to the friendship of the King of England and the Company, whom he had considered as one, but now he thought otherwise, he had not yet taken revenge.

He makes peace with the Mahrattas.

Thus openly and decisively warned, the Presidency at Madras applied to the Governor and Council at Calcutta, who agreed to assist them with fifteen lacks of rupees (£187,500). They also urged Colonel Goddard to conclude a peace with the Mahrattas; but in this they were anticipated by their new and formidable adversary: he had already effected a treaty with the Government of Poonah, by which hostilities were terminated, and the contracting powers agreed to wage war on the English in every part of India. Preparations were made on either side. Hyder collected eighty-six thousand men, or, including a body acting under his son Tippoo, nearly one hundred thousand, with seventy brass guns and five howitzers. In his numbers were included two thousand two hundred and sixty Europeans, Mustees, and Topasses*, with European officers, and at the head of them was M. Lally, to whose advice the Indian chief paid great deference.

1780.

24th July.

To oppose this force, the regiments which the government could command were ordered forward; letters were written to Bengal, Bombay, Tellicherry, the Nabob of Arcot, the Rajah of Tanjore, Sir Edward Hughes, and the officers commanding on the different stations, to induce them to make diversions; and it was even planned that Hyder's own dominions should be assailed from the sea, and Seringapatam, his capital, besieged†.

23rd July. Hyder Ally invades the Carnatic.

Before these measures could be pursued, even before they were meditated, the ruin they were intended to avert had been accomplished. Hyder, rushing down with his irresistible force, had invaded and desolated the Carnatic. How can his irruption and its

* Portuguese soldiers.

† First Report of the Committee of Secrecy, and Appendix, No. 36 to 44; Reports, vol. vii, p. 1, p. 233.

consequences be so well described, as in the words of a celebrated orator, forming one of the most splendid passages of recorded eloquence; its composition glows with the fervour of poetry, its truth of statement and correctness of delineation render it matter of history. "He resolved," says Mr. Burke, "in the gloomy recesses of a mind capacious of such things, to leave the whole Carnatic an everlasting monument of vengeance, and to put perpetual desolation as a barrier between him and those, against whom the faith which holds the moral elements of the world together was no protection. He became, at length, so confident of his force, so collected in his might, that he made no secret whatsoever of his dreadful resolution. Having terminated his disputes with every enemy, and every rival, he drew from every quarter whatever a savage ferocity could add to his new rudiments in the art of destruction; and compounding all the materials of fury, havoc, and desolation, into one black cloud, he hung for a while on the declivities of the mountains. Whilst the authors of all these evils were idly and stupidly gazing on this menacing meteor, which blackened all their horizon, it suddenly burst, and poured down the whole of its contents upon the plains of the Carnatic. Then ensued a scene of woe, the like of which no eye had seen, no heart conceived, and which no tongue can adequately tell. All the horrors of war before known or heard of, were mercy to that new havoc. A storm of universal fire blasted every field, consumed every house, destroyed every temple. The miserable inhabitants, flying from their flaming villages, in part were slaughtered; others, without regard to sex, to age, to the respect of rank or sacredness of function, fathers torn from children, husbands from wives, enveloped in a whirlwind of cavalry, and amidst the goading spears of drivers, and the trampling of pursuing horses, were swept into captivity, in an unknown and hostile land. Those who were able to evade this tempest, fled to the walled cities. But, escaping from fire,

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"sword, and exile, they fell into the jaws of fa-
"mine*."

1780.

To oppose the mighty force of the invader, the Madras Government possessed no more than fifteen hundred Europeans, and four thousand two hundred sepoys, with an artillery of forty-two field pieces, five cohorns, and four battering cannon. A party in the Council, anxious to retain the presence and vote of Sir Hector Munro, offered the command of this small body to Lord Macleod; but that noble and experienced officer having declined, Sir Hector marched to Conjeveram, the largest village in the Carnatic, sixty miles from Madras, and thirty-five from Arcot, the capital of the province; and he expected to be joined by Colonel Crosby from Tanjore, with fifteen hundred sepoys, four hundred cavalry, their light infantry, and four three-pounders, and by Colonel Baillie, from the northern circars, at the head of three thousand men, including two companies of European infantry, and sixty artillerymen, with ten field-pieces.

Sir Hector Munro takes the field.

Tippoo Saib opposes Colonel Baillie.

Hyder was before Arcot; when apprized of these movements, he raised the siege and detached Tippoo Saib, with thirty thousand horse, eight thousand foot, and twelve pieces of artillery, to intercept Colonel Baillie, while he, with the rest of his army, took a station near Conjeveram, to watch Sir Hector Munro.

Sept.

Tippoo, with his overwhelming force, attacked Colonel Baillie at Peerambaum, about fifteen miles from the main army, and was gallantly repulsed; but as he still

6th.

hung on the detachment, Sir Hector sent Colonel

8th.

Fletcher, with twelve hundred men, to his relief. On their junction, they were attacked by Tippoo, and,

9th.

although the vast superiority of his force, and some unavoidable accidents, occasioned much confusion, the troops would probably have reached their destination, but, on the following day, Hyder, with his main body,

10th.

moved to the support of his son. Even against this mighty army, the Company's troops maintained an

* Speech on the Nabob of Arcot's debts; Burke's Works, 8vo. vol. iv. p. 259. Wilke's Historical Sketches of the South of India, vol. ii.

obstinate, and not always a hopeless, struggle, until a movement of an English party, not rightly understood by the sepoys, caused a panic; two tumbrils blowing up, made a chasm in the lines, overturned and disabled the guns, and deprived the brave little band of ammunition. In this distressing state, they were charged by Hyder's whole force. Hopes were entertained that Sir Hector Munro would advance to their relief, and an unfounded rumour that he was doing so spread terror through the numerous host of the enemy. At length, Colonel Baillie, having seen the destruction of most of his sepoys, many of his Europeans killed, and the rest, among whom he was one, dangerously wounded, held out a flag of truce. It was treated with contempt, and the unfortunate commander, having no ammunition, and no weapons but swords and bayonets, ordered his men to lie down, in the hope that Sir Hector Munro might yet appear. In this situation, the enemy rushed upon them, and the whole corps would have been sacrificed to the savage fury of the Indian chief, had it not been restrained by the humane interposition of the French commanders, Lally and Pimoran. Although this victory was so complete, Hyder retreated, dreading an attack from Sir Hector Munro; he was soon informed that the English general was also retreating toward Chingliput, and sent parties in pursuit, who returned loaded with plunder, and bringing in many prisoners, most of them grievously wounded. Severe censures were pronounced on the conduct of Sir Hector Munro; but, on the other hand, the misfortunes of the day are attributed to the want of skill and discretion in Colonel Baillie*.

Whose detachment is entirely cut off.

Hyder's exultation in his success was tarnished by as much cruelty as could be displayed by an infuriate savage. The wounded were trampled to death where they lay, by elephants and horse sent for the purpose; Colonel Baillie, wounded as he was, and conveyed from the field on no better vehicle than a cannon, was laid on the ground at the tyrant's feet, and doomed to see the heads of his brave companions in arms exhibited

Cruel treatment of the vanquished.

* Wilks's Sketches of the South of India, vol. ii. p. 277.

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for the satisfaction of the conqueror, Englishmen being compelled to carry them. Nor was this cruelty the mere ebullition of momentary rage; those who, instead of immediate death, were sent into captivity, were treated with every kind of inhumanity. Particulars would be shocking and disgusting; famine and stripes were their constant portion; their irons were not allowed to be removed, even when their health required it; and when they asked for medicine, they were told, they were not brought there to live, but to die, and that such an event was to the Nabob the most agreeable that could be announced. To close this part of the subject, it may be stated, that the brave Colonel Baillie, who, when wounded and tied at the tyrant's feet, yet retorted his reproaches with manly spirit, fell a victim to cruel treatment and neglected maladies: after undergoing every insult and hardship that could be devised, he died in a dungeon in Seringapatam*.

Death of Col. Baillie.

Sept. Hyder captures Arcot.

31st October.

3rd November.

Hyder Ally resumed the siege of Arcot. A reinforcement of Europeans, sepoys, and artillery, under Colonel Lang, was sent in; the approaches were conducted with perseverance, although without much skill; but, at length, the pettah, or town surrounding the fort, having been taken, after a resistance of six weeks, the citadel capitulated. A large quantity of military stores was an acquisition highly important to the victor, and the town was sufficiently extensive to afford protection and accommodation to his whole army. He treated the people with lenity, and continued in their situations some of the considerable officers of the Nabob's government. Much accusation and recrimination passed between the Council at Madras and the Nabob's ministers; but the evil consequences of the surrender could not be palliated. The whole country was overrun, Hyder's cavalry cut off, supplies of provisions and draft cattle from Madras,

Alarming state of Madras.

* In October, 1782. The preceding narrative is derived principally from a work called Memoirs of the War in Asia, by an Officer in Colonel Baillie's detachment; see also Life of Sir David Baird, vol. i. p. 16 to 28; and, for a horrible view of the barbarities exercised on the British prisoners, p. 39 to 50, 57 to 68; and see First Report from the Committee of Secrecy; Reports, vol. vii.; and Appendix, No. 1, pp. 43, 48, 54, 55, 56, 57; No. 2, 3, 6, 9, pp. 103, 114-119.

and many inhabitants of that open town, alarmed at the growing perils, shipped themselves and their property for Europe, or sought refuge in other parts of India. Neither the Nabob of Arcot, nor the Rajah of Tanjore, being able to afford assistance in men or money, Bengal was the only hope of the presidency of Madras; and that government promised speedily to send them a reinforcement of troops, under Sir Eyre Coote, and a supply of money, if not adequate to all their wants, at least sufficient to avert the pressure of immediate distress*. 1780.

In the commission intended to replace Lord Pigot, arrangements were contained for new modelling the government, confiding its powers to a Supreme Council, and was not to exceed, but might be less than seven. By a separate general letter, the Company ordered that, for transacting all affairs, political, military, and naval, and such as might require secrecy, a select committee should be appointed, the component members of which were specifically selected. Neither the experience of recent, nor the pressure of present danger, produced unanimity in the council or committee; in both, the Governor held his authority only by his deciding vote. In vain were communications made by the Nabob of Arcot, of the hostile intentions, combinations, or movements of Hyder; even when the invader was in the Carnatic, ruining our ally and menacing the existence of Madras, Sir Hector Munro could not, without hesitation, delay, and difficulty, proceed to head the troops, lest, in his absence, the Governor should be outvoted on every question. At last, after much correspondence, much crimination, exculpation, and recrimination, the Directors dismissed Sir Thomas Rumbold, Mr. Hill, and Mr. Perring, from the service; Mr. Smith and Mr. Johnson, two of the opponents of the Governor, were deprived of their seats in council, and strong censure was expressed against Sir Hector Munro. Before this resolution was adopted, the Government was in a state of the greatest disorder.

11th June. 1778. 8th Feb. Divisions still exist. 1781.

* First Report from the Committee of Secrecy; and Appendix, No. 18.

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1780. August.

Mr. Sadlier, a member of the Council who had censured recent proceedings with great bitterness, and in language sufficiently intemperate, was, by a vote of the body, suspended from his situation, and, still continuing his invectives, Sir Hector Munro most imprudently sent him a challenge, which, for very sufficient and indeed unanswerable reasons, he declined*.

October.

Procedings in Bombay.

In the presidency of Bombay, a secret and select committee were appointed†, and disunion prevailed in a considerable degree; but the effects were not generally felt, and they require no detail or observation.

In Calcutta.

Calcutta continued to exhibit a scene in which political hostility, long continued, assumed the character of personal rancour. Every proposal of the Governor was vehemently resisted in a manner which, as he observed, might stamp on the authors of public measures the opprobrium of every failure, at the same time that its influence essentially tended to prevent success. Mr. Hastings also complained that when his voice was excluded from an influence on the resolutions of the Board, he made it a rule to assist and support every measure which was sanctioned by the majority; but Mr. Francis and Mr. Wheler invariably joined in loading every operation of Government, originally untertaken against their opinions, with unremitted opposition, even to the extent of five several motions on the same subject‡.

1779.

1780. Mr. Hastings disobeys the Company's orders.

Three great topics of disagreement were found in the orders issued by the Company for the reinstatement of Mr. Fowke, Mr. Bristow, and Mahommed Reza Khan. To all these orders, Mr. Hastings had refused or deferred obedience. For this conduct he assigned strong reasons, founded on his situation with respect to the powers in India, and sometimes on the conduct of the parties themselves. In fact, this was one of the greatest difficulties of his situation: he had accepted it on the terms of implicit deference to the

* Second and Third Reports from the Committee of Secrecy, and Appendix; Rep. vol. vii.

† Sixth Report from the same Committee; Rep. vol. viii. p. 534.

‡ Same volume, p 479.

Directors; but their orders, issued long after events had taken place, and not to be received until a long period after they were issued, must often have been nugatory, useless, and even injurious. It is not intended to analyze the cases in question; but the disobedience or hesitation of the Governor-general, however contrary to his supposed duty, was not always without excuse, from circumstances of which the Directors could not be aware.

Endeavours to arrange differences.

When the combination of the native powers had assumed an alarming appearance, and it was conceived that nothing less than a general effort of all the presidencies could support the interest, or even preserve the name of Britain in India, the necessity of tranquillizing animosities became so apparent, that gentlemen who were not members of the Council interfered; Sir John Day and Major Scott, then Mr. Hastings's aid-de-camp, and afterward his agent in England, arranged that the orders of the Company, with respect to Mr. Bristow, Mr. Fowke, and Mahommed Reza Khan, should be in substance, if not literally, executed; and Mr. Francis is said to have assented to a proposition delivered to him in a written paper in these terms: "Mr. Francis will not oppose any measures which the "Governor-general shall recommend for the prosecu- "tion of the war in which we are supposed to be en- "gaged with the Mahrattas, or for the general support "of the present political system of this government. "Neither will he himself either propose or vote with "any other member who shall propose any measure "which shall be contrary to the Governor-general's "opinions on these points." On the faith of this compact, Mr. Hastings reinstated the parties who had been removed, or made compensations where a reinstatement could not be effected, and Mr. Barwell took his departure for England.

1780. January.

February.

Mr. Hastings yields certain points.

Opposition still continued.

In a very short time, the hope of permanent tranquillity vanished. The conduct of the war met continual opposition; and, although Sir Eyre Coote, who was now a member of the Council, supported the

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1780. 3rd July. Mr. Hastings's minute.

measures of the Governor, he acted merely as a candid judge, not as a devoted partizan. At length, Mr. Hastings entered on the proceedings a very strong minute respecting the conduct of Mr. Francis. He considered Mr. Wheler merely as a co-operator with him, and said, "I did hope that the intimation conveyed in my last minute would have awakened in Mr. Francis's breast, if it were susceptible of such sensations, a consciousness of the faithless part which he was acting towards me; I have been disappointed, and must now assume a plainer style, and a louder tone." He recapitulated the opposition which had been made by Mr. Francis to his measures for carrying on the war, and proceeded: "But, in truth, I do not trust to his promise of candour; convinced that he is incapable of it, and that his sole purpose and wish are to embarrass and defeat every measure which I may undertake, or which may tend even to promote the public interests, if my credit is connected with them." In general policy, he had always thwarted the Governor, and, even when resolutions had long been proceeded on, he still impeded their success by vehement animadversions. By him had disappointment and misfortune been aggravated. Every fabricated tale of armies devoted to famine and to massacre, found their first and most ready way to his office, where it was known they would meet with the most welcome reception. To the same design were attributed the annual computations of declining finance and an exhausted treasury; computations which were framed to accelerate the predicted event, and create an artificial want, by keeping up an useless hoard of treasure, and withholding it from circulation. He then, after stating the agreement entered into in February, added, "By the sanction of this engagement, and the liberal professions which accompanied it, I was seduced to part with the friend to whose generous and honourable support, stedfastly yielded in a course of six years, I am indebted for the existence of the little power which I have ever possessed in

1780.

"that long and disgraceful period, and to throw myself on the mercy of Mr. Francis, and on the desperate hazard of his integrity."

11th Sept. Mr. Francis's answer.

Against this attack, Mr. Francis defended himself by solemnly denying that he ever was party to the engagement, or had a thought of being bound by it. "In one of our conversations in February last," he says, "Mr. Hastings desired me to read a paper of "memorandums, among which I presume this article "was inserted: I returned it to him the moment I had "read it, with a declaration that I did not agree to, or "hold myself bound by, the contents of it; from that "time, I have never seen the paper; I never had a "copy of it, nor have I a positive recollection of any "thing it contained. The agreement I meant to "enter into with respect to the Mahratta war, was to "prosecute the operations actually existing on the "Malabar coast, which, since the campaign was begun, "and General Goddard had already taken the field, I "thought should be pushed as vigorously as possible." After vindicating his own general conduct, and asserting his disinterestedness in the negotiation, he denied the inference drawn from Mr. Barwell's departure, asserting that it had been determined in the foregoing season, and a packet detained on purpose, and concluded by professing that he acted intirely on public grounds, and that no private interest governed his proceedings.

5th November. Mr. Hastings's reply.

Mr. Hastings replied, contradicting, in most positive terms, the assertions of his opponent, and naming, as capable of proving some of his assertions, Sir John Day, Mr. Barwell, who was apprized of every circumstance, and Mr. Wheler himself, without whose knowledge Mr. Francis avowed that he had never proceeded.

27th Nov.

Mr. Francis and the Governor-general each wrote a subsequent minute;

10th Dec.

but it is remarkable that Mr. Wheler never appears to have offered one syllable in support of his friend's statement; the only paper he put on record being an assertion that he always acted and voted from his own judgment, and not in subserviency to the views of his supposed coadjutor.

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Mr. Francis's last minute begins with an observation that the question between Mr. Hastings and himself could not be decided by any human tribunal. Indeed, considering the unreserved manner in which each of the disputants had treated the character and denied the assertions of the other, it was difficult to imagine that the dispute could be terminated without an appeal to the laws of honour. A meeting took place, and Mr. Francis was wounded*.

Mr. Francis's letter to the Directors.

Whatever may have been the motives of Mr. Francis's opposition, and whatever hopes he may have entertained respecting its ultimate success, his prospects at this time were most distressing. At the expiration of the five years, when, by law, Mr. Hastings's government might have terminated naturally, he was re-established in it for one year, and no intention to remove him intimated in any quarter. Soon after his duel, Mr. Francis returned to Europe, having first written to the Directors in terms of lofty displeasure, not to say reproach, declaring that they had suffered the Company's fundamental principles of policy to be overset, their instructions to the Governor-general and Council to be violated, and their own specific orders, in various instances, to be disobeyed with impunity. They had heaped condemnation, from year to year, on the Governor-general and another member of the Council, in the strongest terms, yet never deprived them of their high trust and station. They had favoured the late Sir John Clavering, Colonel Monson, Mr. Wheler, and himself, with repeated assurances of approbation and promises of support; but, in fact, no measure had been adopted corresponding with these professions and promises. "The struggle," he added, "to which I have dedicated my labours so long without effect, is now at an end. In the course of three "months I mean to quit Bengal, and return to England, where, it is possible, my presence may be of

12th Dec.

* Fifth Report from the Select Committee; Rep. 5. pp. 658 and 805, et seqq. and Sixth Report from the Committee of Secrecy; Rep. vol. viii. p. 911, et seqq. Gleig's Memoirs of Hastings, vol. ii. p. 297.

"some use to the Company, though it is of none "here*.

1780.

In nothing had Mr. Hastings and Mr. Francis differed more widely than in their views of the manner in which the war ought to be conducted. Alarmed at the progress and apprehensive of the views of the enemy, Mr. Francis thought only of the safety of Bengal, and would have concentrated the military operations in defence of the seat of government. Mr. Hastings, on the contrary, viewed the interest and welfare of every part of our dominions as affecting the whole, and alike the objects of care and exertion. Under the prevalence of these opinions, means were taken to attack in every quarter; on the coasts of Coromandel and Malabar, and in the province of Malva. Sir Eyre Coote, Commander-in-chief, was dispatched to Madras, to head the army, with a reinforcement of three hundred Europeans in battalion, and two hundred European artillery, with some cannon; he had, also, five hundred native soldiers, fifteen lacks of rupees, (£187,500) and a large supply of provisions†. He came to his command under most discouraging circumstances. The Carnatic was in a state of complete devastation, and an able and politic enemy in possession of its capital; which, by his moderation and equity, he had turned to the utmost advantage, rendering Arcot an ample, a safe, and pleasant asylum for his army. Another effect of this politic conduct was eminently unfavourable to the English cause. The sepoys, who had wives, children, and other near relations in Arcot, contracted an aversion to the service by which they were severed from them, and many desertions took place‡.

Different views of the war.

5th Nov. Sir Eyre Coote sent to Madras.

State of affairs on his arrival.

The force under Hyder Ally consisted of a body of infantry, which the lowest reports fixed at seventy, the highest at one hundred thousand, of whom twenty thousand were in regular battalions, aided and instructed by four hundred French; there were

Force of Hyder Ally.

* First Report from the Select Committee; Rep. vol. v. p. 439.

† War in Asia, p. 242.

‡ Letter from Sir Eyre Coote to the Council of Madras, 10th Nov. 1780. Papers on the Trial of Mr. Hastings, vol. ii. p. 1155.

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one hundred pieces of cannon of different calibres, worked by three hundred Europeans and corps of black artillery, who had been perfected in discipline by the English. They were in the service of the Nabob of Arcot; but, on the reverse of his fortunes, had entered that of the victor. He had thirty thousand cavalry, of which two thousand were Abyssinian horse, constantly about his person, and ten thousand raised in the Carnatic, one half of whom, like the artillery-men, had been trained and disciplined by the English, and had, like them, relinquished the falling cause of the Nabob. Beside other measures which shewed consummate skill, the Asiatic chieftain had secured ample provision for this mighty force, having thirty thousand bullocks constantly employed in collecting necessaries*.

State of the Council at Madras.

On the other hand, distrust of each other, or indifference to the general cause, seems to have pervaded the members of the Madras government, more especially after the deposal of Lord Pigot. The intire and unrestrained command of the forces was readily consigned to Sir Eyre Coote, a task of the most discouraging description. He had to rescue from an unjust privation of command† General Stuart, a brave and meritorious officer, whose character he fully established by a general court martial‡. Before a council of war, he shewed that the whole effective strength of his army, infantry, cavalry, and artillery, amounted to 6,885 men; and 500 sepoys might perhaps be added. Velore, Wandewash, and Permacoil, were closely invested, and in different degrees of danger; their safety and that of Chingleput were of great importance; and he was of opinion, that, if it were inevitable, he might engage with success; but his troops must not be divided into detachments; nor had he any confidence in the speedy arrival of succours from Bengal, or from General Goddard's army acting against the Mahrattas. The council of officers agreed in all his opinions, and,

And of military affairs.

30th Dec.

* First Report, ubi supra.
† Barrow's Life of Lord Macartney, vol. i. p. 67.
‡ War in Asia, p. 244.

although not required by strict rule, the result of their deliberations was communicated to, and approved by, the President and Select Committee*.

Miserable state of Madras.

Nor was the state of Madras itself, or of the country or the people, calculated to inspire confidence. Immense herds of peasants and inhabitants of the Carnatic had fled to the suburbs for refuge; and there they presented the pitiable spectacle of hundreds perishing through absolute famine, while the government could afford them no relief. The Nabob of Arcot struggled to maintain his political existence, but had never, since the commencement of hostilities, furnished the least pecuniary contribution; and the Rajah of Tanjore had barely satisfied the demands of his feeble garrison; payments were discontinued; bills dishonoured: loans were deemed impracticable, and, had it not been for the prodigious exertions of the Bengal Government, the Madras army must have been disbanded†.

Hyder's early intelligence.

To his other advantages, Hyder added that of early and exact intelligence, while his opponents were miserably deficient in this important particular. This difference has been ascribed, but perhaps inconsiderately, to the hatred which animated the natives against the British name, and made them espouse the interests even of their own enemy, persecutor, and oppressor. There can be no doubt that the fame acquired by the Mysorean leader would inspire a favourable feeling in the bosoms of those who, if his enemies, were still his countrymen; and they would readily adopt the opinion which he boastfully promulgated, of the success which must necessarily attend his invincible arms. But he had also the advantage of a force, which, overrunning the whole country, and restrained by no considerations of compassion, could detect, and would cruelly punish, all who should be guilty, or even suspected, of withholding or falsifying the intelligence they required, and still more of conveying any to their opponents.

* Appendix to First Report of the Committee of Secrecy; Reports, vol. vii. p. 593.

† Barrow's Life of Lord Macartney, vol. i. p. 83.

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Besides, Hyder, from his well-replenished exchequer, rewarded liberally, and even profusely, those who made useful communications; while the needy condition of the English, and, perhaps, a little ill-judged economy in their chiefs, prevented them from gaining their ends by the only probable means, rewards*.

Movements of the British forces.

Convinced of the disadvantages of defensive warfare against an enemy who had caused it to be reported throughout India that the British army durst not venture beyond reach of the guns of fort St. George, Sir Eyre Coote sent a detachment, under Colonel Corby, against Laulah, one of Hyder's generals, who, at a post near Pulicat, thirty miles from Madras, intercepted supplies, and incommoded the city. The Indian was routed, with great loss of baggage, arms, and provisions. The English commander, with his whole disposable force, immediately took the field, captured Carnangooly by surprise, and compelled Hyder to raise the long-protracted siege of Wandewash, while Tippoo abandoned an attempt which he had meditated as leading to the capture of Vellore. Although the joy of these successes was somewhat damped by the news of the surrender of Amboor, which yielded after a short and inadequate resistance, yet they conferred renown, and gave reputation to the British arms, which, if they could not yet preponderate, were allowed to be great and formidable.

17th Jan. 21st.

Arrival of a French fleet.

Sir Eyre Coote met with some interruption in his operations, through the alarm occasioned by the arrival of a French fleet, which, unopposed by any adequate force, threatened Madras, and seemed to render the general's presence necessary. Retreat was the more mortifying, as he was prompted by his own courage, and urged by the wants of his troops, to use all possible efforts for bringing the enemy to a battle. He was soon enabled to pursue this object, by the disappearance of the French fleet, and by information that Sir Edward Hughes had recaptured Mahé, taken Hyder's navy in his own ports of Callicut and Manga-

* War in Asia, p. 280.

lore, and brought off the garrison of Tellicherry, consisting of one company and twenty artillery-men, all Europeans, and one battalion and four grenadier companies of sepoys, who were thus enabled to join him, their place being supplied by troops from Bombay.

Hyder levies contributions.

In this interval, Hyder sent a detachment under M. Lally, who levied contributions to the amount of seventy thousand pagodas (£28,000) on the Danes at Tranquebar and the Dutch at Negapatam. He also plundered the country of Tanjore, hitherto spared, reduced the fortress of Tiagar, after a siege of two months, and collected an army at Sanjaveram, and a train of artillery at Seringham, for the purpose of besieging Trichinopoly, while Tippoo again invested the fortress of Wandewash.

19th June. The English repulsed at Chillambaram.

The British army, recruited by the garrison from Tellicherry, and a battalion of sepoys from Nagore, attacked a pagoda at Chillambaram, on the evening of a festival. The enemy were not, however, unprepared; and, after a considerable display of valour, the assailants were repulsed, with loss. This affair, in its aspect so disastrous, proved eminently beneficial to the English interests. Elated with the advantage which had been gained, and which was much exaggerated, Hyder harangued his troops, and, after decrying the valour, and depreciating the resources of his adversaries, promised by an immediate attack to drive them into the sea, or cut them to pieces. In vain did the more prudent M. Lally point out the danger of such an attempt; in vain demonstrate the great strength of the English artillery; and that their enterprizes were only restrained by a deficiency in the means of transporting stores and supplies; Hyder was confident and immoveable, and made many judicious dispositions for a general action.

1st July. Battle of Porto-novo.

At an early hour, the British force, consisting, in all, of about eight thousand men, marched out of Porto-novo in two divisions, one under Sir Hector Munro, the other under General Stuart, to meet an enemy whose force could not be less than sixty, but was by some stated at one hundred thousand men,

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among whom was an overwhelming cavalry, to be opposed by only two regiments. In artillery, the advantage was on the side of the English, as they had forty-nine field-pieces and four howitzers, while the enemy had but forty-seven pieces of different calibres.

After some preliminary firing, and the repulse of a large body of horse, the British general discovered a range of redoubts constructed by Hyder, which commanded the road, and would have made an attempt to advance a voluntary dedication of his troops to utter destruction. A council of war was called; and, while they were deliberating, a fakeer pointed out a new road among the sand hills, which, upon examination, was found to be sufficient for the passage of the troops and artillery. This road, which was new, and an ingenious contrivance of Hyder Ally for the annihilation of his enemies, proved the means of their preservation. His intention was, while they should be engaged in storming the batteries in front, to pour on them, through this avenue, the whole force of his cavalry; but they now passed in safety by this very opening, and faced the enemy in a new position. The Indian chief, if disappointed, yet undismayed, vigorously opposed the manœuvres and attacks of his enemies; his infantry, cavalry, and artillery were all well employed; but he was routed in every direction; and, had not the want of horses prevented a pursuit, the day to him would have been most completely disastrous. He drew off his cannon without molestation, and effected his retreat with inconsiderable loss. As the Hindoos, from a religious feeling, carefully remove their wounded from the field, it is not easy to ascertain the extent of destruction among them; it was conjectured at three thousand, while, among the British troops, it did not exceed four hundred. On our side no officer of distinction was killed or wounded; but Hyder had to lament his son-in-law and favourite general Meer Saib, who retired mortally hurt from the field.

Its effects.

Although the military results of this day's success might not be deemed of the highest importance, the moral and political consequences were of considerable

magnitude. The Mysorean learned to think more justly of the enemy he had so presumptuously undervalued, and the natives withdrew from him the superstitious prepossession that he was fated to exterminate the English, and in that pursuit invincible.

Tippoo driven from Wandewash.

Shortly after this battle, Sir Eyre Coote received a reinforcement from Bengal, under Colonel Pearse, consisting of ten battalions of sepoys, and twenty pieces of cannon; a supply most imperiously called for, as the whole European force, invalids included, amounted only to five hundred and fifty-two men, with an inadequate artillery*. With the timely aid thus received, the English were enabled to drive Tippoo from Wandewash, and to take Tripassore, where they found a large and seasonable supply of provisions.

Tripassore taken.

22nd August. Battle at Peerambancum.

Eager for a battle, by which alone he could hope to extricate himself from all his difficulties, Sir Eyre Coote marched toward Hyder, who was about sixteen miles distant. The Indian did not shun the conflict, but, with a little superstitious feeling perhaps, fell back to the ground which was the scene of his triumph over Colonel Baillie. Here he had judiciously secured every advantage of position for self-protection and the operation of his greatly superior force. By skilful manœuvres, he drew the first line toward a dangerous position, in avoiding which, Sir Hector Munro found himself on the spot where Colonel Baillie had expected his aid in vain, and where the limbs and bones of the brave men who had fallen on that disastrous day must have conjured up unpleasant ideas, and tended to ruffle the temper of any chieftain, however forbearing. In this situation and frame of mind, he received an order from the Commander-in-chief, so manifestly injudicious, that he respectfully remonstrated against it. The reply made by Sir Eyre Coote was, "Sir, you talk "to me when you should be doing your duty." Language so offensive to a brave man, and so discourteous to a gentleman, sunk deeply into the mind of the se-

27th.

* Letter from Sir Eyre Coote, 3rd July, 1781. Papers on Mr. Hastings's Trial, vol. ii. p. 1176.

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cond in command. He pursued a course of implicit, but ruinous, obedience, until his troops, perceiving that their lives were uselessly sacrificed, began to show dispositions adverse to discipline, and fell into confusion. Fortunately, the Mysorean did not observe, and had not calculated on, this circumstance. Evening advancing, the firing of the enemy ceased, and the English army had time to withdraw from this dangerous situation. Deceived by false reports, the troops lay all night under arms; but, by break of day, they discovered that the enemy, not choosing to risque another encounter, had retired to a safe distance. Both sides claimed a victory; but, in truth, the English troops had no ground for boasting of success, although they might justly pride themselves on a bravery which no disadvantages could appal, and congratulate themselves on the good fortune which saved them from destruction. The General fell back toward Tripassore, having to lament a loss far greater, both in men and officers, than he had sustained at Porto-novo; while the enemy suffered much less destruction, and, far from feeling depressed, spread the boast of their victory in all parts of Hindostan.

27th Sept. Battle of Chillanger.

Another battle took place, a month afterward, at the pass of Chillanger; it was obstinately contested; but discipline and skill gained, as usual, the superiority over less-instructed valour. Unable to comprehend, and consequently to resist, some of Sir Eyre Coote's manœuvres, Hyder withdrew his artillery, and then his troops, in haste and confusion from the field, having suffered a loss of one thousand men, a greater number of horses, and one field piece; while, on the other side, the destruction amounted to only one officer and sixty privates*.

Arrival of Lord Macartney.

In the mean time, Lord Macartney, who, with the general vote of the Directors and Proprietors, and with the entire approbation, although without the influence, of ministers, had been appointed to the government, arrived at Madras. This nobleman was advanta-

* War in Asia, p. 251 to 275.

geously known as a polite and accomplished scholar, and had already displayed his talent for business in a mission to Saint Petersburgh as envoy plenipotentiary; in Ireland as chief secretary; and in the West Indies as governor of Grenada*. Before his lordship's arrival, the Supreme Council of Bengal had attempted a negotiation with the Dutch, proposing to unite with them and the Nabob Wallajah, for mutual protection against the invader of the Carnatic†, which produced no effect, as the Dutch Governor was apprized, by a French frigate, sent express, of the hostilities between his country and Great Britain.

1780. 21st June.

January. Negotiation with the Dutch.

Lord Macartney felt the difficulties of his situation, but did not shrink from its duties. He knew that the Bengal government had announced the probability of their being unable much longer to continue supplies of money and provisions; yet he emptied the treasury to quiet the army by paying a portion of their arrears; he took up vessels on credit, to acquire supplies of grain; and he adopted means for obtaining, on loan, sums of money, so essential to the safety of the presidency, that he did not hesitate to acquiesce in the exorbitantly usurious demands of the lenders. To keep up the confidence of the people, an immediate attack was made on the Dutch settlements. Sadras surrendered on the first summons, and Pulicat without more difficulty‡.

Efforts of Lord Macartney.

Dutch settlements taken.

Under the inspiring influence of this change in the appearance of affairs, the last three battles had been fought with Hyder Ally. A detachment, under Colonel Owen, aided by Captain Moore, advanced to storm the fort of Chittoor. Hyder attempted to cut off this party, and a severe conflict ensued, in which the English suffered considerable loss; but the enemy, hopeless of effecting his great purpose, withdrew to Palipet, the place from which he had departed. Chittoor was afterward taken without much difficulty, the army having, in the mean time, been greatly relieved

Chittoor taken 23rd.

October.

23rd.

26th October to 9th Nov.

* Barrow's Life of Lord Macartney, vol. i. p. 1, et seqq.
† Reports, vol vii. p. 617.
‡ Barrow's Life of Lord Macartney, vol. i. p. 87.

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by the capture of a considerable quantity of rice, and seven hundred bullocks laden with salt. The rainy season soon set in; and, after some struggles against the enemy in the neighbourhood of Tripassore, and the irresistible fury of the monsoon, the English army terminated their busy and eventful campaign, in which they had sustained a loss of one third of their numbers*.

Conclusion of the campaign.

Efforts of Lord Macartney to procure peace.

Pursuing the course of policy which circumstances so imperiously dictated, Lord Macartney lost no time in endeavouring to negotiate a peace, and to allay the jealousies and still the apprehensions of the native powers. To these he gave the strongest assurances of pacific dispositions in the British government and the East India Company. To the Sovereign of Mysore, the united letters of Lord Macartney, Sir Eyre Coote, and Sir Edward Hughes, tendered the means of commencing a negotiation. The answer of Hyder was lofty, evasive, and criminatory. He complained of the uncertainty which attended the fulfilment of treaties, when they who made them might be recalled, and their successors deny the force of the compact; complained of the treatment he had received on a former occasion, and, in allusion to the expectation of reinforcements from Europe, he did not pretend to dispute the truth of the assertion, but professed a reliance on the favour of God for his succours†.

Writes to Hyder Ally.

His answer.

* War in Asia, p. 278, et seqq.
† Barrow's Life of Lord Macartney, vol. i. p. 91.

CHAPTER THE FIFTY-THIRD.

1781—1784.

Transactions with Cheyt Sing.—His agreement—demands of money—and troops.—Mr. Hastings goes to Benares—his motives—his behaviour to Cheyt Sing.—Correspondence.—Arrest of Cheyt Sing—his humility.—Insurrection of the people—danger of Mr. Hastings.—Cheyt Sing retires to a fortress.—Indiscreet attempt of Captain Mayaffre. Situation of Mr. Hastings.—Conduct of the native powers. The Begums of Oude.—Movements of the British troops. The Rajah's fortresses taken.—Cheyt Sing deposed.—A successor appointed.—Objects of the enterprise not attained. Conduct of the Begums—their punishment.—Effect of these events on the native powers.—Madras.—Conduct of the Nabob of Arcot.—Favorable circumstances.—Weakness of the British force, compared with that of the enemy.—Relief of Vellore.—Return of Sir Eyre Coote.—Differences between him and Lord Macartney.—Sir Hector Munro rejoins the army.—Colonel Braithwaite's detachment surrounded—severe fighting—surrender.—Generous conduct of M. Lally.—Barbarous conduct of the natives.—A French reinforcement landed.—Cuddalore taken.—Ineffectual attempts to bring Hyder to battle.—Battle of Arnee.—An English regiment taken.—Negotiation with the Mahrattas. War continued.—General Goddard's victory at the Gauts. Scindiah makes peace.—General treaty with the Mahrattas. Siege of Tellicherry.—Bravely defended by Major Abingdon.—He makes a successful sally.—Fate of Surdar Khan and his family.—Effects of the victory.—Capture of Calicut. Negotiation attempted with Hyder.—Trincomalee taken by the French.—Distress and disunion in the Presidencies.

Death of Sir Eyre Coote.—State of Hyder Ally—his death —and character.—Tippoo's hatred of the English.—War with him—he evacuates the Carnatic.—Peace proposed. Tippoo's insincerity.—Expedition under General Mathews. Capture of Onore.—Further progress.—Surrender of Hyder Nagur.—Tippoo reinforced—takes Bednore.—General Mathews suspended.—Advance of Tippoo.—Battle of Coodry.—Actions in the Carnatic.—Battle near Cuddalore.—News of the peace.—Tippoo refuses to make peace.—Siege of Mangalore.—The peace known.—The French separate themselves from Tippoo.—Surrender of Mangalore.—Peace concluded.

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Transactions with Cheyt Sing.

Some transactions which had recently occurred between Mr. Hastings and Cheyt Sing, the Rajah of Benares, were unfavourable to the hope of peace with any of the native powers. In consequence of the non-payment of the forty lacks of rupees (£500,000), so much noticed in a former page, the province of Benares had been ceded by Assuf ul Dowlah to Great Britain*.

His agreement.

The Rajah, Cheyt Sing, was left in administration of the government which had belonged to his father, with a condition that, in case of a war, he was to contribute, both in money and military force, to the defence of the common interest. Accordingly, when hostilities with France became known, the Bengal government applied to him to raise and maintain three battalions of sepoys; and, for their pay, he was required to advance annually five lacks of rupees (£62,500): he made no objection; and his vakeel, in his name, signed the required engagement.

Demands of money.

Whether through the persuasions of the French, from a knowledge or anticipation of the junction of the great powers of India against England, or from information of the distracted state of the council at Bengal, or from the union of these and other causes, the tone and manner of the Rajah became intirely changed. He, who had before professed so much ala-

* Ante, Chapter 50.

crity, made apologies for delay; and he, who was reputed to be the richest potentate on the continent, the possessor of an immense treasure, wrote a letter, in terms of abject humility, declaring that he took on himself the payment of the five lacks, as his proportion of the expenses of the war, although he had no ability left, and had sold or pledged every thing belonging to him; but the money was at last paid. In the following year, with excuses, lamentations, and delays, the subsidy was made up, in small sums. The next year, a messenger from the Rajah waited on Mr. Hastings, and, imploring forgiveness of the past, gave the assurance, confirmed by the oath of his principal, of his future submission and compliance. The Governor-general relied on these promises so much as to devote the expected sums to express purposes, particularly to the troops under Major Camac; but after, slowly and by small instalments, paying one lack, the Rajah solicited forbearance as to the residue until the following year; nor was it supplied until the service had suffered materially, both in the well-being and discipline of the troops, through the delay.

1781. 1778. 28th Sep. 1779. 1780.

Another demand was made for a supply of two thousand of his cavalry, the abundance and excellence of which were known; the number was at first reduced to fifteen hundred, then to one thousand, while the Rajah offered only two hundred and fifty, but sent none.

And troops.

Distressed as the government was in all the presidencies, its armies deficient both in numbers and supplies, and its treasuries drained to the lowest ebb, Mr. Hastings judged it necessary to repair in person to Benares, to insist on a more exact and cordial fulfilment of this treaty. He considered Cheyt Sing as culpable in a very high degree, his punishment, as an example, required both by justice and policy; and he determined to make him pay largely for his pardon, or to exact a severe vengeance for his past delinquency*.

Mr. Hastings goes to Benares.

His motives.

Actuated by such feelings, the demeanour of the

* Hastings's Narrative, printed at Calcutta.

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1781.

His behaviour to Cheyt Sing.

15th. Correspondence.

Arrest of Cheyt Sing.

16th.

His humility.

Insurrection of the people.

Governor-general was lofty, and his manner peremptory. Several advances made by the Rajah were repelled, and he was ordered not to visit without permission. A paper from the Governor-general was transmitted to him, complaining of his conduct, and requiring an immediate answer. Cheyt Sing wrote an explanatory letter the same evening, and Mr. Hastings considered it not only unsatisfactory in substance, but offensive in style, less a vindication than a recrimination; and, at ten o'clock the same night, an order was issued for putting the Rajah under arrest.

In execution of this command, Mr. Markham, with two companies of Major Popham's grenadier sepoys, repaired to the Shewallah Ghaut, the residence of the Rajah. He professed ready obedience, requiring only a subsistence; his zemindary, his forts, his treasure, and his life, if required, he was ready to lay at the Governor's feet. Further correspondence in the same tone mollified Mr. Hastings so far, that he desired the Rajah to set his mind at rest, and not conceive any terror or apprehension; and promised that Mr. Markham should attend him in the afternoon. The Rajah, in reply, professed the utmost confidence and unreserved submission.

Whether all this apparent prostration was merely a specimen of Indian duplicity, intended to lull suspicion while a great design was put in execution, or whether the events which followed arose merely from unpremeditated impulses in the bosom of the people, cannot be ascertained; but the latter seems the more probable conjecture. Before Mr. Markham could depart with his second dispatch, intelligence was received that large bodies of armed men had crossed the river from the fort called Ramagur. The sepoys, who had been first sent, having taken with them no ammunition, another company, well armed and supplied, was forwarded to their support; but, on their arrival, they found the Rajah's house surrounded, and all the avenues blockaded. The insurgents fired on the sepoys, who, wanting their usual means of defence, made but a feeble resistance; the officers exerted themselves

with greater energy, but, in the end, all, to the number of two hundred and five, were killed or wounded. During the confusion, Cheyt Sing escaped from a wicket, opening to the river; and, by the help of turbans tied together, descended the steep bank and gained the other side, followed by the troops who had effected his rescue; the house was left in the hands of the English.

Danger of Mr. Hastings.

Had the enemy proceeded to the Governer-general's quarters, he, with thirty English gentlemen, protected only by fifty sepoys, must have fallen victims to their rage; and, however it may have been censured as presumptuous, it does not appear an exaggeration in Mr. Hastings, when he says that such an event would have been decisive of the national fate; every surrounding state would have started into arms against us, and every Indian subject in our own dominions would, according to his ability, have become an enemy. It is clear that this great risk was not prudently incurred, nor was the proceeding against the Rajah managed with judgment or propriety. If persuasion was intended, the tone of the Governor-general was too harsh and objurgatory; if coercion, a better provision should have been made against resistance.

18th. Cheyt Sing retires to a fortress.

Cheyt Sing fled, at first, to Lutteespoor, about fourteen miles west of Chunar, afterward to Ramnagur, a place much better calculated for defence, where, with his whole force and all his treasure, he awaited events. The British troops, consisting of four companies of sepoys, one of artillery, and one of rangers, halted at a secure distance, preparing for a joint attack, which was intended so soon as Major Popham should arrive to assume the command; but Captain Mayaffre, senior in command in his absence, anxious, probably, to distinguish himself by a brilliant exploit; without a plan, without inquiry, and against the advice of all his officers, ordered the detachment to enter the town. In the narrow lanes and streets, the enemy, without even presenting themselves in view, fired on and repulsed them, with a loss of one hundred and seven killed, and

20th. Indiscreet attempt of Captain Mayaffre.

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seventy-two wounded: the rash projector of the expedition was among the slain.

Situation of Mr. Hastings.

Mr. Hastings, with his small body of forces, drew off to Chunar; and, although he sent repeated dispatches in every direction for succour, he had much reason to fear that they were intercepted or suppressed.

Conduct of the native powers.

From some of the native powers he experienced instances of generosity and attachment; from many others, of duplicity and insincerity. The Rajah himself wrote to him, with slight expressions of regret for what had passed; and some apparent attempts were made to open a negotiation; but these were evidently intended only to gain time. Oude was in a state of rebellion, supported and fermented by Cheyt Sing.

The Begums of Oude.

There was some reason to suspect the fidelity of the Nabob Assuf ul Dowlah; his mother and grandmother, the Begums Nawaub Allea and Jenauley Allea, were said to have openly espoused the party of the Rajah, encouraging and inviting the people to enlist for his service; and their servants took up arms in the cause, harassing the Company's sepoys under Colonel Hannay, and surrounding the colonel himself, who narrowly escaped with his life.

27th to 31st. Movements of the British troops.

At length, public rumour, and some dispatches, which reached them, apprized the military commanders of the state of affairs, and Colonel Morgan, Colonel Cumming, Lieutenant Polhill, and Captain Blair, arrived with detachments from various quarters. The war soon became active; a detachment from Major Popham,

3rd Sept.

under Captain Blair, advanced in the hope of surprising the enemy's camp at Pateeta; but, at day-break he found it abandoned, and the natives, in perfect order and a strong position, awaiting his attack. A bloody and obstinate conflict ensued, in which the Indians shewed great firmness and considerable skill, but were defeated; a victory of the highest importance, from the impression it made of the British military character. Fresh reinforcements and supplies of money continuing to arrive, the troops were in full spirits, and decisive operations were expected.

The force of the Rajah consisted of about twenty-two thousand soldiers, aided by an almost equal number of armed husbandmen and volunteers. They were distributed in two fortresses of different strength, called Bidjegur and Luttespoor; the strong town of Pateeta and the fortress of Ramnagur. To oppose this force, Mr. Hastings had three companies of Europeans, with thirty artillery-men, three regiments of sepoys, and one battalion and six companies of other native troops. It was proposed to begin with the attack of Ramnagur; but, information, most correct and opportune, having been derived from Burdookhan, an inhabitant of Chunar, a divided assault on the strong places was made. Pateeta, after a siege of five days, conducted by Major Popham, was taken by storm; a body of men posted at Lora, for the defence of Luttespoor was defeated by Major Crabb, with great loss, and the victor found the fortress deserted. With equal ease, Mr. Balfour took possession of Ramnagur. Mr. Hastings first removed to that place, and then to his original quarters at Benares, having first made arrangements with the Nabob Vizier, which were afterward carried into effect; and thus was this hasty and eventful war happily terminated.

The Rajah's fortresses taken.

15th.

20th.

21st.

22nd.

23rd. 28th.

End of the war.

Astounded by the first operations, Cheyt Sing fled, carrying with him treasure to the supposed amount of £400,000; he was attended but by a few followers, the rest of his train at Luttespoor staying only to plunder the place, and then retreating to their homes. His title to the Zemindary and Ranje being forfeited, the next lineal heir, Bauboo Mehipnarain, was, after proper renunciations had been obtained from the Ranny Goolaub Kooer and her daughter, invested and proclaimed; his father, Bauboo Doorbijey Sing, being at the same time invested with the office of Naib, and thus becoming sole efficient manager. The fugitive Rajah received the protection of Madajee Scindia*.

Cheyt Sing deposed.

A successor appointed.

30th.

Although the final result of this expedition was less disastrous than it portended, its object had entirely failed. The Governor-general is reported to have

Objects of the enterprize not attained.

* See Second Report of the Select Committee, with its Appendix.

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said, before he left Calcutta, that as the Rajah's wealth was great, and the exigencies of the Company pressing, it would be a measure of policy and justice to inflict a mulct of forty or fifty lacks (£500,000 to £625,000) for their relief. In the event of the contest, this hope was utterly disappointed. Cheyt Sing carried off much treasure, and the residue, by order of Major Popham, was divided as prize-money. This appropriation was strongly and justly censured by Mr. Hastings; but the money, divided among so many, could never be recovered*.

Conduct of the Begums.

Sujah ul Dowlah's widow, generally called the Bhow Begum, and the widow of Mir Jaffier, called the Munny Begum, both considerably advanced in years, had ample provision allotted for the maintenance of their dignity, under the denomination of Jaghires, or revenue derived from lands, over which they could exercise a sort of sovereignty. As the dispute with Cheyt Sing advanced, and appeared likely to terminate disadvantageously to the British power, these ladies exercised their influence to increase difficulties, and to excite and influence enemies against the Governor-general. When the contest had terminated, he accused them of raising disturbances in the country; giving assistance to Cheyt Sing; revolting against the Nabob, their sovereign, and aiming at the extirpation of the English. Orders were issued for the resumption of their Jaghires, the amount in future to be paid from the treasury; the Nabob Vizier seized the property they had accumulated, and by those means was enabled to discharge a debt of six hundred thousand pounds which he owed to the government of Bengal†.

Their punishment.

Effect of these events on the native powers.

Whether the acts above recorded were justifiable or not, their immediate operation was adverse to all hopes of treaties. The native powers could not fail to

* See Second Report of the Select Committee, with its Appendix and Supplement, which are wholly devoted to this subject; Reports, vol. v. p. 445; also the Tenth Report of the same Committee, and Appendix, No. 3 and 4; Reports, vol. vi. pp. 487, 523, et passim.

† See Second and Eleventh Reports of the Select Committe; Reports, vol. v. pp. 520, 550, 572; and vol. vi. pp. 487, 579, with the Appeddixes; Gleig's Life of Hastings, vol. ii. c. 9. These transactions relative to the Begums became afterward the subject of a long and anxious inquiry.

perceive that amity, however long established, afforded no guaranty against the effects of sudden displeasure, and that to be deposed, despoiled, and banished, were the results of a dispute in which the English gained the ascendancy. They still saw these dreaded victors beset with enemies, although no longer in such imminent danger, and they had no sufficient motives for withdrawing from the general association: they knew them in a state of great financial distress, but could not easily persuade themselves to concede powers which might be used to their own destruction.

Madras.

At Madras, hopes of further supplies from Bengal had ceased, and every effort to gain a contribution from the Nabob of Arcot had failed; with characteristic cunning, he had assigned the countries of Trichinopoly and Tinevelly for the use of the Company during the war; but, as he had taken care that his own agents should be left in receipt of the revenue, the natives, oppressed and plundered, cursed the English as the cause, while no profit accrued to them from the exactions*.

Conduct of the Nahob of Arcot.

Favourable circumstances.

During the interval of active service, while Sir Eyre Coote was encamped on the plain of Colore, on account of the rainy season, many circumstances had occurred to revive the hopes and augment the confidence of the British government. Through Lord Macartney, an arrangement was, at last, effected with the Nabob of Arcot, which obviated some of the difficulties in collecting the revenue†. Hyder Ally had refused to treat with the English, relying on succours expected from the French, and on the division of the British force which would be occasioned by the hostility of the Dutch. His mortification must, therefore, have been extreme, when he learned the successive capture of the settlements of Sadras, Pulicat, Negapatam, and other places, and probably heard the royal salutes fired in the British camp on occasion of these conquests. The hopes held out by the French were equally illusory; the efforts which that country was

* Barrow's Life of Lord Macartney, vol. i. p. 109.
† Ibid.

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making in America did not allow of any great additional exertion in India; and although Great Britain was not at the moment undisputed mistress of the sea, yet Sir Edward Hughes was able to resist and baffle all attempts to render effectual assistance. Soon after the capture of Negapatam, the English admiral attacked and took Trincomalee and Fort Ostenburgh in Ceylon, which completed the expulsion of the Dutch from the coast of Coromandel, afforded facilities, had such an intention been entertained, for the reduction of their settlements in Ceylon, and made an opening for the British forces into the heart of Tanjore. The credit of Hyder Ally, founded on military success alone, was considerably impaired by these events; he evacuated the forts and places of strength which he held in Tanjore, he had been deserted by some of the rajahs who had joined his banners; and the Polygars, who, at his instigation, had rebelled against the Nabob of the Carnatic, returned to their allegiance.

Weakness of the British force, compared with that of the enemy.

Still, in resuming hostilities, the British commanders found themselves beset with perplexing difficulties. Their supplies, although facilitated in a considerable degree by exertions both by sea and land, were neither copious nor certain. The numerical strength of the foe, his cavalry, and his means of transport, were infinitely superior to ours; and the time no longer existed when a very small European force could strike with terror an immense Asiatic army. The sepoys in the European service had learned tactics, steadiness, and discipline; and the troops of the enemy, if not equal to these instructed natives in all particulars, and although far behind the English soldiers, were yet sufficiently taught and seasoned to render the attack of an adversary, disproportionately inferior in numbers, hazardous, and, perhaps, unjustifiable.

5th January. Relief of Vellore.

The first operation of Sir Eyre Coote was the relief of the garrison at Vellore, where he threw in provisions for three months, although Hyder Ally opposed him with his whole force, and impeded his march by inundating the country; no action took place, but some distant cannonading, which destroyed lives

without beneficial result. Each army, when its ground was advantageous, offered battle; but the chieftains were too wary and judicious to engage under such circumstances. They separated, and Sir Eyre Coote, whose declining health required some repose, and who was irritated by disagreements, returned to his position at the Mount, and occupied himself in forming magazines at Chingliput and Tripassore.

15th. Return of Sir Eyre Coote.

Differences of opinion, amounting almost to hostility, prevailed between Lord Macartney and Sir Eyre Coote, while this commander was still unreconciled to Sir Hector Munro, whom ill health, and other causes, induced, after some stay at Bengal, to desire a return to Europe. He was drawn from his resolution by a due consideration of the necessities of the service, and arrangements were made by which he was exempted from the controul of Mr. Sadlier, to which he had determined never to bend.

Differences between him and Lord Macartney.

Sir Hector Munro rejoins the army.

A recent event, which had occasioned great uneasiness and alarm, called for the exertion and co-operation of every part of the British forces. Colonel Braithwaite, with one hundred Europeans, fifteen hundred natives, three hundred cavalry, and thirteen field-pieces, called the southern army, was encamped near the River Coleroon, for the purpose of protecting Tanjore and the neighbouring provinces. Suddenly, and without any intimation that such a movement was intended, he found himself surrounded by an army under Tippoo Saib, amounting to more than twenty thousand natives, four hundred Europeans under General Lally, and twenty pieces of artillery. The Mysorean prince, confident in his superior numbers, attacked, at the same time, in every direction, and hoped, by force of artillery and vigorous charges of cavalry, to break the British line without much resistance; but Colonel Braithwaite formed his small army into a hollow square, dividing his cannon among the fronts, and placing his cavalry in the centre. The attacks of Tippoo were resisted and repelled during three days, of which twenty-six hours were spent in hard fighting. The steadiness, bravery, and discipline of the sepoys would have

Colonel Braithwaite's detachment surrounded.

Feb. 16 to 18.

Severe fighting.

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done honour to the troops of any nation; but they were worn down by incessant exertion, their ranks thinned by slaughter, and most of them enfeebled by wounds. On the third day, M. Lally, at the head of his four hundred men, kept, until then, quite fresh as a reserve, advanced with fixed bayonets against that side of the hollow square which seemed most enfeebled, while the usual modes of attack by cavalry and artillery were renewed on the other three sides. The assailants prevailed, and the brave band, whose resistance had been so glorious, remained at the mercy of the enemy. Lally, feeling as became a nobleman of a highly-civilized nation, not only restrained his own troops from wanton carnage, but, by his remonstrances, and even his personal efforts, prevented the sanguinary excesses of the native victors. He obtained from Tippoo Saib acts of apparent humanity and generosity; the prisoners were supplied with clothes and money, and orders issued for their being well treated on their march to the camp of Hyder Ally at Conjeveram. These commands were only obeyed for the moment; when the Prince was no longer present, the troops were stripped of their money, and forced, under threats of mutilation, to give up every species of property they possessed; they were curtailed of their food, and, in great measure, deprived of the means of transport; and they were afterward, during the whole period of their imprisonment, subjected to the same indignities and hardships as those who had formed the detachment of Colonel Baillie*.

Surrender.

Generous conduct of M. Lally.

Barbarous conduct of the natives.

March. A French reinforcement landed.

M. De Suffrein, with the French fleet, was now off the coast; nor could Sir Edward Hughes prevent his landing two thousand European troops, who joined Tippoo Saib. This event both increased the strength and elated the spirits of the native prince; great effects were expected, and the English general's anxiety was increased by the surrender of Cuddalore, after a short siege, to Hyder Ally and the French. He moved with his whole army to the relief of Wandewash, in which

8th April. Cuddalore taken.

Ineffectual attempts to

* War in Asia, pp. 65, 76.

he succeeded; but could not draw his opponent into a battle: he retreated to an unassailable situation on the red hills.

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As a last expedient, Sir Eyre Coote directed his steps toward Arnee, a strong fortress, where the great magazines were deposited. He was encamped within five miles of the place, when Hyder descended from the hills. The English General still advanced toward Arnee, and had reached the place, when a firing in his rear apprized him that, in effect, a battle was begun. On this, as on many other occasions, the British troops were surprised through the impossibility of receiving intelligence, all approach to them being cut off by the immense bodies of the enemy's cavalry, which scoured the country in every direction. They suffered from a distant cannonade while forming; but that being speedily effected, they waited only for a favourable opportunity to make a general attack: it was completely successful: the enemy fled at all points, and were followed till evening, though without the destruction generally attending so complete a rout, as want of cavalry prevented a vigorous pursuit. On the following day, Hyder precipitately evacuated a position apparently unassailable, rather than risk a fresh encounter, and, with forces still far exceeding those of his opponent, retired toward Arnee. On this important place the English made some attempts, which, for want of battering cannon and scaling ladders, they were obliged to relinquish, and they commenced a march toward Madras, in the course of which an English regiment of cavalry, called the grand guard, was drawn into an ambuscade, surrounded and taken. After some fruitless attempts at retaliation, the General, whose health appeared now to be irreparably broken, retreated, first to Wandewash, and afterward to Madras.

bring Hyder to battle. Battle of Arnee.

6th June. An English regiment taken.

As these encounters were the last in which the valour and skill of Sir Eyre and Hyder Ally were measured against each other, it is now necessary to advert to the progress of affairs in other parts of the continent. Peace with the Mahrattas was justly de-

9th and 20th. Negotiation with the Mahrattas.

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sired, as the means of weakening the too powerful enemy, and of liberating a large body of British troops, which might be engaged in other operations. As soon as the hostile intentions of Hyder appeared, a treaty was offered, by which all conquests made over to native powers, except two, were to be restored, and all those made by the chief of Mysore were to be re-conquered and shared by the captors. When these proposals had remained three months unanswered, General Goddard, having assembled about six thousand troops at Visrabuy, advanced toward Poonah. As their road lay through a chain of hills, extending along the Malabar coast, from Guzarrat to Cape Comorin, the enemy, to defend the gauts or passes, re-assembled twenty thousand men, with fifteen pieces of artillery, which numbers were afterward more than doubled by reinforcements under Holkar and Ragonaut Pundit. They placed themselves advantageously at Condolah; but General Goddard, by an intrepid and skilful operation, ascended the pass at midnight, and drove them from all their posts in a state of total defeat and rout. In their alarm, they destroyed by fire a considerable town midway between the scene of their disaster and Poonah, and prepared the same fate for the capital itself; but the English General, guided alike by humanity and sound policy, drew off his troops.

1781. January. War continued.

General Goddard's victory at the Gauts.

8th February.

Scindia makes peace.

1781. Oct.

1782. 17th May.

General treaty with the Mahrattas.

These hostile operations were not of a character to prevent the restoration of peace. Scindia, a powerful member of the Mahratta empire, had concluded a treaty, and, becoming a strenuous mediator between the English and the government of Poonah, a treaty was at length concluded, which, considering the exigency of the times, was advantageous and honourable. Bassein and all other places taken from the Mahrattas, since the treaty with Colonel Upton, were restored; Salsette and the adjacent islands were confirmed to the English for ever; Broach, with its territory, was also yielded to them; but the engagement made by the Peishwa for the surrender of an adjacent demesne was discharged; and a country, obtained from the

Guicowar and claimed by the Mahrattas, was ceded to them. Ragobah was to fix for himself a place of residence; and if that should be in the dominions of Madajee Scindia, that potentate engaged to give him twenty-five thousand rupees (£3,125) per month.

The Mahrattas engaged that, within six months after the ratification of the treaty, Hyder Ally should restore all places and prisoners taken from the English and their allies; and on his performance of those conditions, and so long as he should abstain from hostilities against both the contracting parties, they would continue at peace with him; and commercial privileges were assured to the English in the Mahratta dominions, to the exclusion of all other European nations, except the Portuguese. Madajee Scindia was the mutual guarantee for the faithful observance of this arrangement; and he obtained, as a compensation for his valuable interference, the city and territory of Baroach*.

Siege of Tellicherry.

Want of sufficient force prevented the execution of a plan, which had been formed, to attack Hyder's own dominions, in order to withdraw him from those parts where he so grievously injured the interests of England. Surdar Khan, one of his subordinate chiefs, formed the siege of Tellicherry, an important and valuable town on the Malabar coast. The defence, owing to the withdrawal of a former garrison, was confided to a fresh force from Bombay, under the orders of Major William Abingdon. Although the works were dilapidated, and his garrison inadequate, he executed repairs, made sorties and repelled attacks with great firmness and perseverance. He applied in vain for succours to the government of Bombay, who declared their intention to withdraw from the place. The Major, while awaiting some promised supplies, made a midnight sally, surprised the enemy's camp, and drove them from it in irreparable confusion. Surdar Khan threw himself into a fortified house, where his women and treasure were deposited; the thatched roof was

7th May.

Bravely defended by Major Abingdon.

1782.
8th January. He makes a successful sally.

* Principally from the Annual Register for 1783, c. 4.

CHAP. LIII.

1782.

soon set on fire, and the party within were obliged to surrender. The final circumstances of this affair are interesting and affecting. Among the members of Surdar's family who endeavoured to escape by dropping down from the walls, were seven most beautiful women, who formed his harem. Captain Christie, when he saw their situation, ordered the firing to cease; but a party of sailors, belonging to the Bombay cruisers, coming up, began to tear the earrings from their persons, and further violence was apprehended. The English captain, by a resolute exercise of his authority, and by a judicious sacrifice of the jewels belonging to these unfortunate creatures, rescued them from all personal injury, and restored them to their lord. Anxious, indeed, was the meeting between the women and their sovereign, who would have deemed any insult to their persons, although inflicted by force, an inexpiable injury. Sullenly, and with a gloomy brow, did he interrogate them; but when satisfied that his fears were unfounded, his gratitude knew no bounds: "You," he said to the British commander, "enjoy the fortune of "this day, and you deserve it. Go, therefore, to a room (which he described), and you will find, for your reward, two lacks of rupees;" and above twenty thousand pounds were accordingly divided among the army. He had been taught to believe that death was the inevitable consequence of his being captured; that fear was relieved when the victors not only assured him of his personal safety, but restored to his arms his wives and children; yet the hand of death was upon the unfortunate prince; grief and anxiety, more than bodily injuries, precipitated him into the grave. As a last favour, he begged that his family might be sent to Seringapatam; and Major Abingdon readily made, and religiously performed, the required promise.

Fate of Surdar Khan and his family.

Immediately after these events, all the enemy's posts surrendered. The victors acquired a great extent of territory and an ample supply of military furnishments, cattle, and stores. Their loss did not exceed nine killed, and forty-nine wounded; while, of the enemy, five hundred were slain or drowned in the

Effects of the victory.

Mahé river, a vast number wounded, and one thousand five hundred prisoners.

1782.

Major Abingdon and his troops received warm and energetic thanks from Sir Eyre Coote. He employed himself for some time, with the best effect, in reinstating several princes whom Surdar had forced from their dominions; and, having finished this task, advanced with his victorious force to Calicut, which he took with little opposition, and was then superseded by Colonel Humberstone, who, as his superior officer, by right assumed the command*.

Capture of Calicut.

12th Feb.

These favourable circumstances gave hopes that peace might be effected with Hyder Ally; and Sir Eyre Coote, being invested with full powers, left Madras, and from Wandewash apprized his opponent of the stipulations in the Mahratta treaty, that unless he restored all the forts and evacuated the Carnatic within six months, his late allies would take the field as his enemies. Hyder, who doubtless was already informed of all these circumstances, and with the French admiral had planned a combined attack, by sea and land, upon Negapatam, contrived to protract the negotiation until the English had nearly consumed all their stores. He then withdrew his vakeel, pretending not to understand some part of the terms proposed, and prepared for active warfare. But, although his cunning had gained him this apparent advantage, the bravery of the English admiral deprived him of the expected benefits. He compelled De Suffrein to an engagement, was victorious, and so assured the temporary safety of the garrison.

Negotiation attempted with Hyder. 1st July.

3rd.

As it was known that De Suffrein had formed hostile designs against Trincomalee, reinforcements were dispatched and safely landed, but the fort was captured; and another naval action ensued, which contributed somewhat to the glory of the rival commanders, but nothing to the benefit of either nation. The military season terminated with an unsuccessful attempt on Cuddalore, from Madras, and in an ineffectual movement of Hyder toward Arnee.

Trincomalee taken by the French.

* War in Asia, p. 304 to 323.

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1782. Distress and disunion in the presidencies.

If the British arms had been crowned with considerable success during the campaign, and their treaties had terminated auspiciously, still much distress was felt in all the presidencies, mutual confidence was banished, complaint and recrimination were constant topics of their dispatches and correspondence; the army blamed the parsimony and improvidence of the civil government, while governors complained of the tardy operations and reluctant movements of the military and naval forces, as the cause of their contracted means and defective revenues. It would now be a waste of time to analyze or even to recapitulate these mutual accusations; but the want of supplies, both pecuniary and military, was severely felt at Madras, where anxiety was rendered additionally painful by the absence of Sir Edward Hughes, who retired to refit his fleet, and the threats of De Suffrein, who, with vessels worse appointed and more disabled, continued to keep the sea. Ill health having obliged Sir Eyre Coote to repair to Bengal, he left to General Stuart that command which he did not live to resume. His death* was undoubtedly occasioned by those severe military labours which did so much honour to his name, and were so eminently beneficial to his country.

Death of Sir Eyre Coote.

State of Hyder Ally.

Nor were the prospects of the Mysorean chief encouraging. He had formed mighty projects, but the great objects of his ambition continually eluded his grasp. The ravage of the Carnatic proved, in the end, an unprofitable desolation; while his troops remained in that ruined country, he was obliged to draw supplies from his own; and, although his great resources in beasts of draught rendered this comparatively an easy operation, delay, uncertainty, and heavy expense, made it sufficiently distressing. His hopes of expelling the English by the aid of the French had probably vanished; for he was too sagacious to retain expectations which had been falsified by experience, and were not countenanced by reason. As the fame of his military character became less dazzling when no

* April 26th, 1783.

longer gilded by fortune, his adherents showed a diminished attachment to his cause, and the treaty between the English and the Mahrattas was a death-blow to his hopes of unlimited influence and ascendancy. Whether the agitation of his mind occasioned by these circumstances accelerated his death, what was the particular cause, and even the exact time of the event, were not at first publicly made known. It was said to have been occasioned by an ulcer in his back, which had afflicted him seven years, and his age is said to have exceeded four score. His decease is said to have happened on the nineteenth of November, but more probably between the fourth and eighth of December. It was generally known on the fifteenth, and publicly mourned on the twenty-seventh of that month*. The probable cause of this mystery was, that his intended successor, Tippoo Saib, who was at a distance, should be apprized of the event in sufficient time to assume the vacant throne, before cabals could be formed or projects executed against him.

1782.

1782. His death.

Hyder Ally must ever occupy a distinguished place among the conspicuous personages of his times. Born in an obscure and humble station, he attained the height of sovereign power, by his genius, perseverance, bravery, and policy. He was not enlightened by education, nor peculiarly favoured by fortune: his advancement was not countenanced, but reluctantly witnessed, by the princes of his own clime; and, in his career, he was not favoured by political association, but, on the contrary, opposed, until his acquired greatness rendered further resistance hopeless. The succession of years saw only the continuance and extension of his labours. Made wise by observing the perfections and the errors of the European governments, he introduced regularity and economy into his finances, system and combination into his politics, discipline and order into his army. Under his command, the native troops no longer fled with dismay at the sight of a small European force; they measured strength with them, and, if not equal in all the arts of war, were

Character.

* War in Asia, pp. 96, 99, 100; see also Barrow's Life of Lord Macartney, p. 162.

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1782.

able to contest manfully and firmly the palm of victory. No longer were their camps so negligently kept, that a surprise by night was rashly and fearlessly to be attempted. No longer, when broken in the field, did they fly in irreparable confusion, and, instead of an army, become only a terrified mob: they rallied at proper points, preserved their cannon and arms, and used such means as Europeans would have adopted to avert ruin, and court, under more favourable auspices, the graces of fortune. In attack too, they had become wary and circumspect, without losing the fire and impetuosity of their native character. In forming such a body, the Chief had been indefatigable, never sparing his own labours, nor omitting the means of acquiring the best advice and assistance. In council, he was no less sagacious, penetrating, and determined. He attended to all the business of empire himself, procured information without regard to expense, and knew how to employ beneficially the talent of every man around him. These high qualities are tarnished by displays of cruelty which are disgraceful to valour, and indicate an internal baseness, which fortune, in her most prodigal gifts of wealth and rank, cannot elevate; but the ferocity of Hyder was chiefly displayed on the English, of whose conduct he complained, and whom, on all accounts, he hated and feared. His conduct toward his own subjects was different; consistently with the system of all the native princes, he ruled with severity, and restrained by terror; but, in his general institutions, he displayed a disposition to justice, conciliation, and, on proper occasions, to indulgence*.

Seeing the sceptre of the Mogul broken, and the supreme power abdicated, he is said to have entertained the project of assuming it himself, and even of enlarging its former ample bounds. Such an ambition became a great and daring mind; of its wisdom, the opinion will probably, as is most frequent in such cases, be drawn from the success. To extinguish the power of England was, of course, the great operation

* The facts tending to his disadvantage are strongly displayed in Wilks's Sketches, vol. ii. p. 280, et seqq.

to be effected; and, before this hope shall be pronounced too daring, the state of the British power at home and in India should be carefully considered. At home, an opposition to government existed, the true nature of which no foreigner ever seems rightly to have understood; in her colonies a rebellion raged, which was openly applauded by a body of men whose views and opinions were unsparingly promulgated. The most powerful nations of Europe were arming, and in the progress of the war declared, against her; while, in India, political discord, passing its usual bounds, displayed itself in terms of contumely and acts of hostility. When he had united the Mahrattas in his views, and secured, as he hoped, the effectual assistance of the French, and when his first operation, the invasion of the Carnatic, had produced such general consternation, his hopes were greatly elevated, and his calculations assumed an appearance of firmness and consistency. His subsequent disappointments, if they agonized his mind, did not affect his conduct; he was never wanting to himself; and, so judicious were his last directions, that Tippoo, although an illegitimate son, and having a legitimate brother, the offspring of a princess, assumed his authority with as little trouble or opposition as if the time had been one of profound peace, and he the unquestioned heir of a long-established and undisputed monarchy.

Tippoo's hatred of the English.

It is said that, in his last days, the expiring Sultan wrote to his successor, advising him to seek peace with the English, and place no reliance on the French; but still to avail himself of their aid, if it arrived within a limited time*. That Tippoo would, under any circumstances, have followed this counsel, may be doubted, considering the sentiments he afterward displayed; but, on the present occasion, his disposition was not put to the test; the French joined him, shortly after the demise of Hyder, with nine hundred Europeans, two hundred and fifty caffres and topasses, two thousand sepoys, and twenty-two pieces of cannon.

December.

* Barrow's Life of Lord Macartney, vol. i. p. 164; War in Asia, p. 383.

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1782. February. War with him.

When the death of his father was announced, Tippoo Saib was engaged in hostility with Colonels Humberstone and Macleod, on the coast of Malabar. A detachment under the former officer had been sent there early in the year, and, as already mentioned, he had superseded Major Abingdon. After much fighting, and encountering many difficulties, his force was

28th Nov.

shut up in Pamana, closely invested by the enemy, a party of whom, under M. Lally, attempting to storm, was bravely repulsed, and sustained great loss. While the government of Tippoo Sultan was recent, his habits of command unconfirmed, and the obedience of those under him not yet facilitated by usage, it was deemed by many a measure of prudence to assail him with all that could be mustered of military force. Lord Macartney strongly supported the measure; but some unaccountable reluctance was shewn on the part of General Stuart, whose attention seems to have been much engaged on subjects of etiquette, and on the exact settlement of his own powers as Commander-in-Chief, and as a member of the Council and of the Select Committee. While he was composing voluminous minutes, and labouring to fix the meaning of the word "only" in the orders of the Court of Directors, the season for effectual exertion was allowed to glide away, and operations, tardily commenced, produced little result on either side*.

1783. 5th—9th Feb.

When the army was put in motion, it repaired, first, to Wandewash, and then proceeded in search of

13th.

Tippoo and his allies, to whom they unsuccessfully offered battle; they then destroyed the works of Wandewash, advanced to Coronjoly, and, finding it could not be defended, withdrew the garrison, secured the stores, and blew up the fortifications. At Vellore, having learned that Tippoo had ordered two sides of the fort of Arcot to be demolished, and was evacuating

20th. He evacuates the Carnatic.

the Carnatic, they went into an encampment within three miles of the Mount.

* The heat generated by these proceedings afterward (8th June, 1786) occasioned a duel, near Kensington, between Lord Macartney and General Stuart, in which the noble Lord was wounded. Barrow's Life of Lord Macartney, vol. i. p. 604; Annual Register, vol. xxviii. p. 203.

1783.

As Tippoo had not marked this retreat with any act of cruelty or desolation, Lord Macartney, through a Bramin, who was at Madras as vakeel to the Rajah of Tanjore, caused it to be intimated that he was desirous of terminating the war, provided the Sultan would engage not to cede to the French any fort, territory, or place in his possession, nor to make common cause with those who had no longer a solid footing in the country. Tippoo answered, that if the English would agree to reasonable terms of peace, he would break off all connexion with the French, although he would not treat them dishonourably, or deliver them up to their enemies. Such an overture might have led to a beneficial negotiation; but when the English Governor required that Tippoo's agent should be furnished with written credentials, the Mysorean insisted that, as Lord Macartney had not sent him a letter of condolence on the death of his father, he could not be the first to write. This was obviously a mere contrivance to gain time for decision, or to obtain essential information; and the mystery was explained by the arrival of M. De Bussy at Cuddalore with the reinforcement already mentioned, which put an end to all expectations of amity.

Peace proposed.

25th.

Tippoo's insincerity.

1783.

A pacific inclination in the mind of the Sultan might have been excited by the progress of the British arms in his own territory. Early in the year, General Matthews, detached from Bombay with four hundred Europeans and a thousand sepoys, landed at Rajah Mondroog, about three hundred miles northward of Pamana, and took Onore by storm; quarter was granted, and nearly three thousand made prisoners. Several smaller forts fell also into the general's possession.

Expedition under General Matthews.

January.

Capture of Onore.

17th.

At Cundapore, Colonel Macleod brought reinforcements, which augmented his force to fifteen hundred Europeans and four thousand sepoys, with a due proportion of Lascars and artillery; but the want of draught cattle curtailed the supply of ammunition and provisions; and, after encountering great privations and difficulties, they gained possession of Hussein Gurry, and

Further progress.

CHAP. LIII.

1783.

prepared, although ill-supplied with means, to attack the forts which protect the territory of Bednore. The commanders almost despaired of success; but, much to their surprise, the fort Hyder Nagur, with all the other forts, and the whole district of Bednore, were voluntarily surrendered. This auspicious event was brought about by the judicious negotiation of Captain Donald Campbell, who having, in the previous year, been shipwrecked on the coast, was detained as a prisoner by Hyder Ally. It is said that, from this time, avarice, pride, and injustice, prevailed in the mind of General Matthews to such a degree as to alienate from him the hearts of his own followers, and to irritate against him the minds of the natives. He added to these bad qualities the misconduct of weakening his main body by occupying every place, however unimportant, until the garrison at Hyder Nagur did not exceed three hundred Europeans and a thousand sepoys*.

28th. Surrender of Hyder Nagur.

Tippoo reinforced.

Availing himself of these circumstances, and having under his command and that of M. De Bussy fifty thousand men, Tippoo fell on the divided bodies of General Matthews, drove in a detachment stationed at Fattiput, and besieged Bednore, which, after two unsuccessful sorties, surrendered on a capitulation, the terms of which were instantly violated. The captives were marched into places of imprisonment, where they shared the hardships, privations, and indignities, which had been so long heaped on their brave fellows in arms and in misfortune.

9th April.

2nd May. Takes Bednore.

General Matthews superseded.

Discontent at the conduct of General Matthews had obliged some of his best officers, Colonels Macleod and Humberstone, and Major Shaw, to quit the army and prefer their complaints at Bombay. The government superseded him, and intrusted the command to Colonel Macleod; but he was prevented from assuming it by an extraordinary accident. He had embarked with

* The censures of General Matthews contained in this narrative are derived from the Annual Register; War in Asia; and various other publications. On the other hand, much explanation is given in a pamphlet, authenticated by fifty-three officers who survived the expedition, intitled "A Vindication of the Conduct of "the British Forces under Brigadier-General Matthews."

his brother officers on board the Ranger, Snow, when they encountered, off Geriah, a Mahratta squadron of five square-rigged vessels. Their commander, not having heard of the treaty of peace, attacked the Ranger, and, after an obstinate combat, in which almost every man in the English vessel was killed or wounded, carried her into Geriah, where the survivors were detained several weeks, and where Colonel Humberstone died of his wounds.

1783. 27th April.

In the mean time, Tippoo continued to advance, opposed by Major Campbell, who impeded his march to Mangalore by judicious manœuvres, and by a well-conducted action, fought on the heights of Coodry, where a complete victory was gained, and four pieces of ordnance, three tumbrils, and many bullocks and horses taken. Still the overwhelming army of the enemy pressed forward, took possession of the heights, the late scene of victory, of the whole coast, and of all the places which the British troops had lately occupied, except Mangalore, with some dependent forts, which Tippoo closely invested.

Advance of Tippoo.

6th May. Battle of Coodry.

17th.

General Stuart was enabled, by the absence of the enemy from the Carnatic, to act with more freedom than before. He soon took the field, in hopes of attacking M. De Bussy at Cuddalore, relying on Sir Edward Hughes for an effectual maritime co-operation. Eight hundred Hanoverian and other European troops having been landed, a general and successful attack was made on all the French outposts under the guns of Cuddalore. The loss of the English was twenty-five officers and two hundred privates killed, and forty-eight officers and seven hundred soldiers wounded; and that of the enemy was nearly equal. They retreated into Cuddalore, which was immediately invested. M. De Suffrein having landed considerable reinforcements, the situation of the fort and of the British General became daily more and more alarming, when all his anxieties were relieved by the intelligence that peace had taken place between the two nations. M. De Bussy desisted from further hostility, and no enemy now remained but Tippoo.

Actions in the Carnatic.

7th June.

13th. Battle near Cuddalore.

News of the peace.

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1783.

Tippoo refuses to make peace.

With him negotiations were attempted; but, flushed with success, animated by hatred of England, and sanguine in the expectation of reducing Mangalore, he did not favour the advances.

Siege of Mangalore.

The garrison consisted of three thousand five hundred and forty-six men, of whom six hundred and ninety-six were Europeans: the besieging force is said to have been one hundred and forty thousand fighting men, with nearly one hundred pieces of artillery, generally commanded by Tippoo Sultan in person, and, in his absence, by

27th May.

Mahomed Ally Cawn, another son of Hyder. From the time of breaking ground, their attacks were almost incessant, and their works were carried on with unremitted vigour, although occasionally interrupted by the garrison. Nor did the besiegers confine themselves to the ordinary means of warfare. Muskets of great size, supported on rests to assure a steady aim, were used, and stones weighing one hundred and fifty pounds, thrown day and night from mortars contrived

7th June.

on purpose, made extensive and fatal ravages. A practical breach having been effected, and a flag of truce refused by Tippoo, a storm was attempted, but,

4th July.

after a severe conflict, repelled.

Reduced almost to despair by sickness, fatigue, and the dreadful scarcity of provisions, the garrison

July.

kept up their spirits only by the hopes of relief, and the expectation of a diversion by means of another invasion of Tippoo's dominions. A feu-de-joie, made by the garrison for some unimportant cause, having led the besiegers to suppose they had been informed of the

The peace known.

pacification in Europe, a fact of which they themselves had been apprized some days, the French refused any longer to assist. M. Piveron de Morlay, their envoy at

July 20.

the Durbar of Mysore, was admitted into the fort without being blindfolded, and used his best endeavours to commence a treaty; but, even while the flag of truce

The French separate themselves from Tippoo.

was flying, the Mysorean continued his assaults, and advanced his works. At length the French, under Colonel de Cossigny, retired from Tippoo's camp, although the tyrant refused them the means of conveyance; and, when they had obtained them, made vain attempts to compel their return.

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For several months, Tippoo seems to have concentrated all his desires into that of reducing Mangalore; and for that object he violated every principle of honour and good faith. When, on a cessation of hostilities, he had stipulated that a bazaar should be opened for the sale of provisions at the country price, he enhanced them until they were unattainable*, and seized on those which were sent from Bombay, causing them to be sold at similar rates. Commissioners, sent to treat of peace, were led about from place to place, refused an audience under frivolous pretences, and detained prisoners.

1783. 2nd August.

All hope of succour having expired, and disease and famine having long exercised horrible ravages, the brave Colonel Campbell, seven months after the news of peace with France had arrived, was compelled to propose a capitulation. The Sultan caught with joy this triumph of his perseverance; allowed the British troops to retire by sea, and engaged not to move from his camp until they should all be embarked. He endeavoured to violate this stipulation, but was checked by the manly declaration of Colonel Campbell, that if any such attempt was made, he would march his troops back into the fort, and defend it to the last drop of his blood. The Colonel did not live to enjoy the applause or experience the gratitude of his country; he expired soon after his arrival at Bombay†.

Surrender of Mangalore.

1784. February.

When this point was achieved, the arrangement of a treaty was soon concluded, on the basis of mutual restitutions, and a release of prisoners: of its permanence few were sufficiently sanguine to entertain a hope‡.

Peace concluded.

11th March.

* A fowl, from nine to twelve rupees; a seer (about a pound) of rice, four, the same quantity of salt three, rupees; and a frog, sixpence. War in Asia, p. 454.

† Account of the gallant Defence of Mangalore, by a British Officer.

‡ In the latter part of this narrative, I have been principally guided by the Memoirs of the War in Asia; Barrow's Life of Lord Macartney; and Wilks's Sketches in the South of India. I have, besides, consulted the Annual Register and other periodical works, and a great number of pamphlets and detached publications, to some of which I have referred in notes. I have no where distinctly quoted Mr. Mills' History of British India; but his work has constantly been before me. I have not always adopted his conclusions; but, in general, the authorities from which we have derived our narratives are the same, except the Memoirs of Mr. Hastings, and a few other recent publications.

APPENDIX.

Extracts from Letters of Sir Joseph Yorke, Ambassador at the Hague, in November and December 1768, and January 1769.

The Baron De Breteuil, French ambassador, had several conversations with the Prince of Orange, turning on a subject of etiquette, but shewing the disposition of the French government. The point, which would seem almost ridiculous, was, that the French ambassador invited the Prince and Princess to his balls during the winter, but was answered that his invitations could only be accepted on condition of his observing the same ceremonies as were practised by Sir Joseph Yorke, particularly that, some days before each supper or ball, he should come in person and make a separate invitation. Far from conforming, the French ambassador, being at a supper at the Prince's, very cavalierly invited him and the Princess for the morrow. This, and subsequent displays of loftiness and neglect on the part of De Breteuil, occasioned several discussions, in which the Frenchman insisted on the difference between the Prince and a crowned head, while the Prince observed that the Princess, at least, being the niece of a reigning sovereign, and the sister of his probable successor, was intitled to all ceremonious observances; De Breteuil alleged that his conduct was in exact conformity with his instructions.

In an interview with the Princess (December 7th), De Breteuil behaved with inconceivable rudeness, observing, among other things, that, as ambassador of his most Christian Majesty, he considered himself on a perfect equality with the Prince; and, when the King of Prussia was mentioned, he said, "Pooh!—the King of Prussia! I have a respect for him, "so I say nothing about him."

He then went to the Prince of Orange, and in conversation said, "Sir Joseph Yorke can do many things which I "cannot; he calls your Highness *Monseigneur*, but my in- "structions prevent me from doing so. I see," he continued, "that the English party have, at length, gained their end; "they were afraid that if you came to me, a connexion might "ensue, which, perhaps, would eradicate from your mind the "inveteracy against France which has always distinguished "the House of Orange, and they have caught at a moment of

" vanity to seduce your understanding. The Prince denied " that an affair of this nature would have any influence on his " political conduct. On this the ambassador observed that " there were always two aspects in which things might be " viewed, and he asked the Prince whether he thought it to " his interest to form a connexion with the English ambassa- " dor, and never more to see the ambassador from France. " Both, he said, had parties in the republic; all the discon- " tented came to him, and he apprized the Prince of the fact, " to convince him that he (Breteuil) did not wish to make a " party against them. He was sorry to see his Serene High- " ness permitting himself to be led by persons whom he had " enabled to gain an ascendancy over him. Mr. Yorke could " be no rule to him, who was an ambassador of family, which " he was not. His Serene Highness returned a firm and polite " answer, denying that he knew of any family ambassador; " he was neither king nor sovereign, and they were both am- " bassadors to the States-general, ' Mr. Yorke,' De Breteuil " answered, ' has been ambassador to your grandfather and to " your cousin-german; but the devil fetch me' (le diable " m'emporte), he added, striking the table with his clenched " fist, ' if you were dead, if the English ambassador would " ' pay the required compliment to your successor.' To this " burst of rudeness the Prince made no reply."

He concluded the matter (January 10th) by declaring that, unless his general invitation was accepted, he would pay his court no more even to the Princess. In the whole course of the affair, he never made any communication to the English ambassador.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

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